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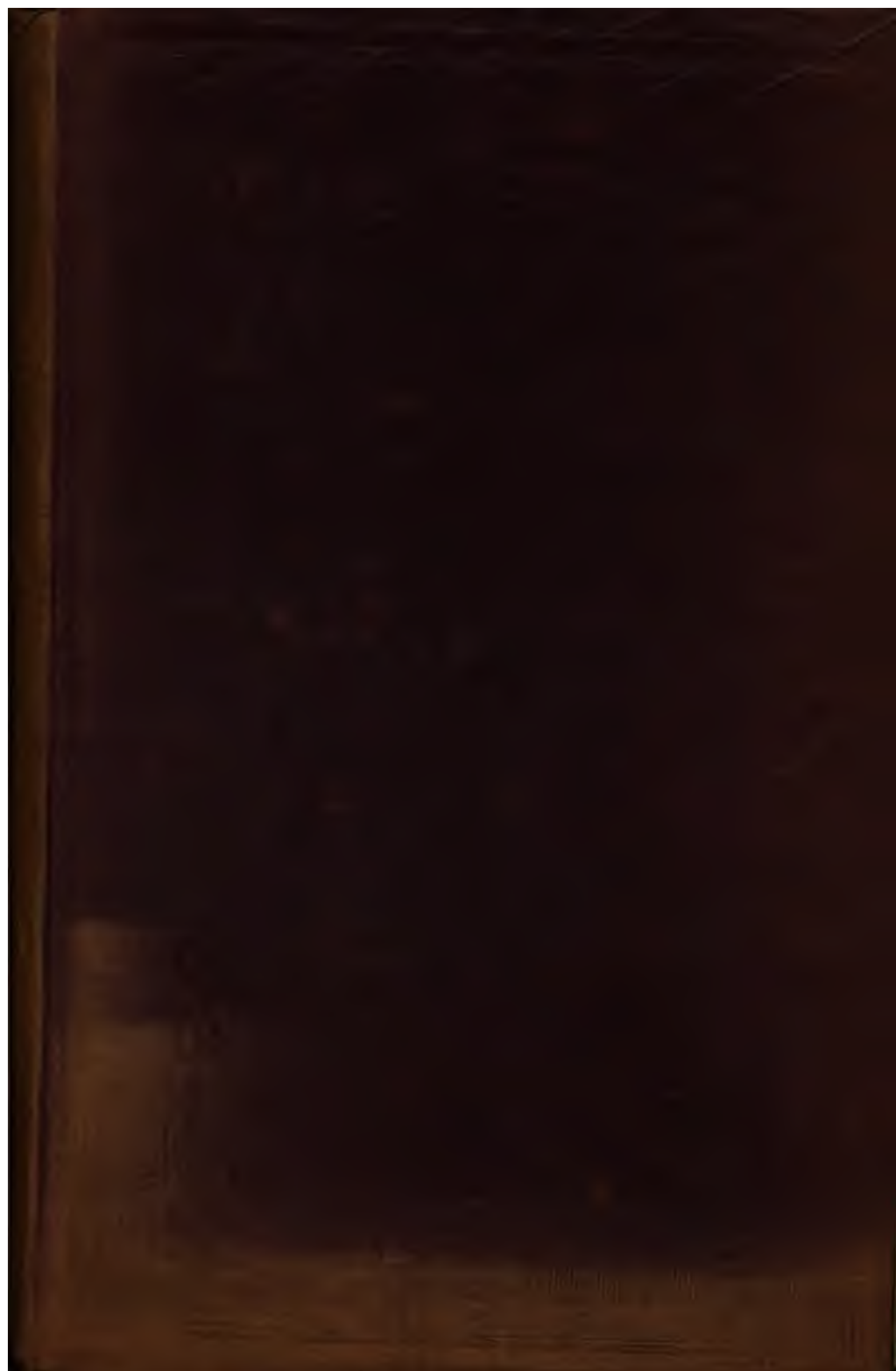
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HENRY OF MONMOUTH;

OR,

THE FIELD OF AGINCOURT.

HENRY OF MONMOUTH:

OR THE

FIELD OF AGINCOURT.

BY

MAJOR MICHEL.

IN THREE VOLUMES

VOL. I.



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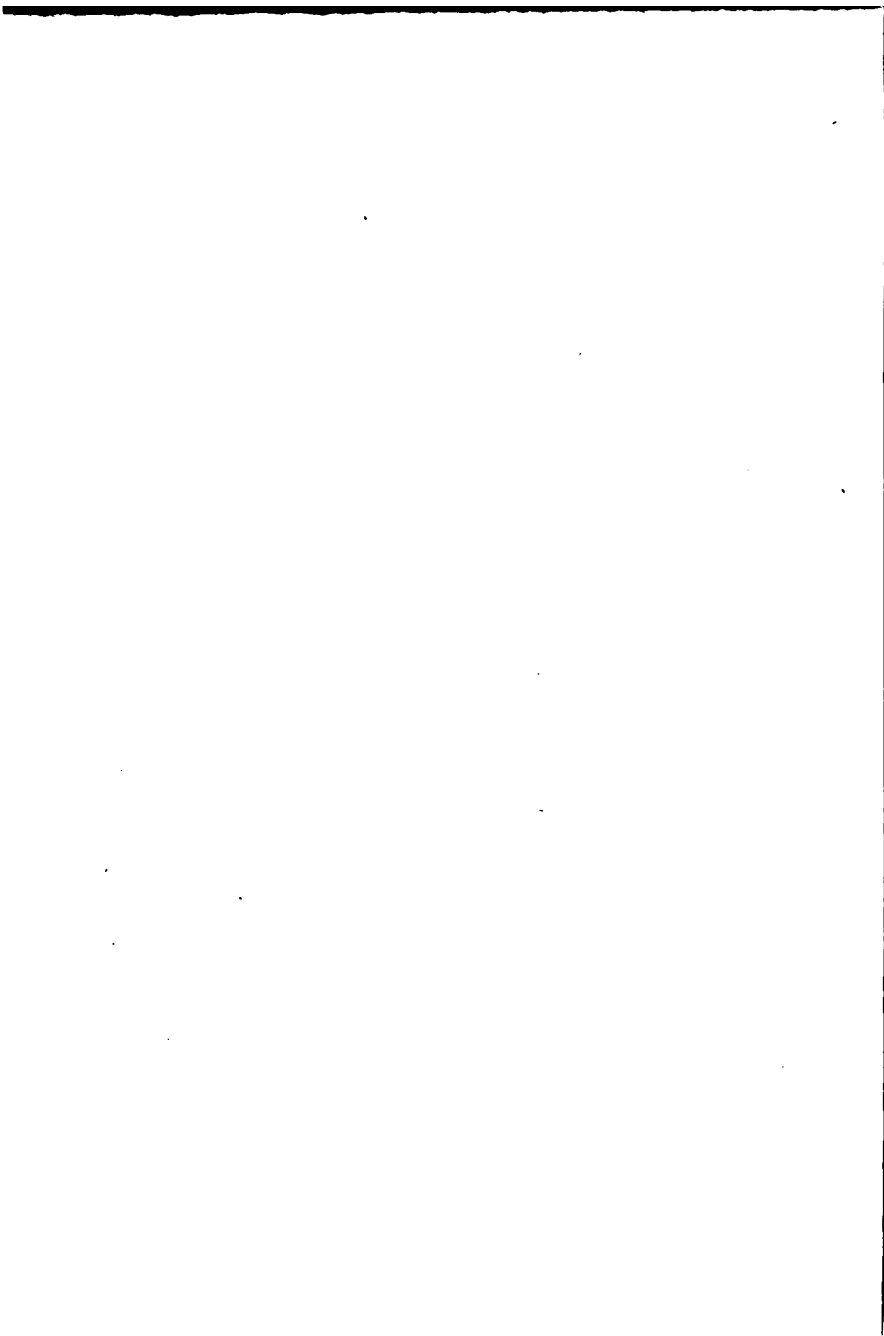
P R E F A C E.

IN the following pages the Author proposes to give an historical sketch of the five eventful years, commencing in 1415, as far as they are connected with the struggle between the rival houses of Valois and Lancaster for the throne of France.

It is intended that the grand historical features should be faithfully delineated; and in those points only where history affords no certain light has the author adopted his own version of the story to be detailed.

Wherever also the personages introduced are not fictitious, he has attempted to delineate their characters precisely as has done history.

It was originally intended that the Earl of March, who was de jure Sovereign of England, should be the undoubted hero of the tale; but as it proceeded history forbade the untruth. Dead, as when living, Henry of England usurped the claim of precedence, and thus were these volumes entitled "HENRY OF MONMOUTH, OR THE FIELD OF AGINCOURT."



GENEALOGICAL TABLE **OF** **THE RIVAL PRETENSIONS OF THE HOUSES OF** **YORK AND LANCASTER.**

Sons of Edward the Third:—

- 1 Edward the Black Prince; whose son was Richard the Second, who died without issue.
- 2 William of Stanfield—died without issue.
- 3 Lionel, Duke of Clarence.
- 4 John of Gaunt.
- 5 Edmund Langley, Duke of York.

HOUSE OF YORK CLAIMED THE THRONE **FROM**

Lionel, Duke of Clarence, third son;

|
Roger, Earl of March.

Edmund, Earl of March—
died without issue.

Ann, married Earl of Cambridge
grandson of Edmund Langley,
Duke of York.

|
Richard, Duke of York.

|
Edward the Fourth.

HOUSE OF LANCASTER CLAIMED **FROM**

John of Gaunt, fourth son.

|
Henry the Fourth.

|
Henry the Fifth.

|
Henry the Sixth.



HENRY OF MONMOUTH.

CHAPTER I.

Down from their seats the horsemen sprung,
With jingling spurs the court-yard rung;
They bind their horses to the stall,
For forage, food, and firing call.

MARMION.

IN the summer of 1415, England was preparing for that war which for years desolated the fairest portions of France, and warriors of all ranks were hurrying to the rendezvous fixed upon by the young king at Southampton.

In July of that year, two travellers, whose appearance denoted the rude soldiery of the age, stopped at a hostelrie between Salisbury

HENRY OF MONMOUTH.

and Southampton, whose sign of the *White Hart** portended but little welcome to the friends of the House of Lancaster.

The elder of the two, who, perhaps, might have seen some fifty winters, was clothed in a loose sort of garment called a gambeson, over which was a hanbeck, or kind of shirt of rings of iron; under this, breeches stuffed with wool, and resembling, in size and make, those of the clown on the modern stage. These reached to the knee, and were here met by hose of nearly the same description; whilst on the foot was a loose boot, and the heel armed with a spur, the rowel of which was three inches in length. A sort of iron pot, called bacinet, covered the

* The white hart was the peculiar badge of Richard the Second, and was as famous during his sovereignty as were the white or red roses during the wars of York and Lancaster. It is recorded by the old chroniclers, that at some of the grand pageants during the reign of Richard the Second, the ladies of his court appeared in garments entirely bespangled with this badge.

head, and by a leathern belt was a shield suspended from the neck ; a long straight sword and dagger completed the equipment.

The younger, upon whose cheek the down of boyhood had as yet hardly given place to the stubble with which the face of maturity is clothed, was also in the warrior's garb ; but in lieu of the bacinet, he wore a description of fur cap, surmounted by feathers of immense length. A sort of tight doublet, with a front barred with silken cords, gave place to the gambeson, whilst on his feet were crackows, or piked shoes, from the points of which to the knee were cords of silk, gilt. An air of coxcombry was thus in his dress ; nor did his general demeanour belie the idea that the pains of the toilet were to his consideration of infinite moment.

Our host, accompanied by a wife, the tone of whose voice, and sundry other trifling indications, betokened that she knew how to assert her right to supremacy, came bustling to the

door, and bowed and scraped quite as much as a modern Boniface would have done.

“What cheer, my worthy host?” said the elder of the travellers: “what news from the shore: the whole world seems flocking to Southampton; there is every trade and profession, from the earl to the stirrup-boy. Brave times for those who love Monmouth, and even those who love him not (as his eye caught the sign floating in the breeze) pick up an honest penny; but how now, sir host, whom have we here? your good house seems already more than stocked. Say, can we be in private, or must we join the throng I hear in yonder kitchen?”

“Why, truly, master David Gamme,” rejoined the landlord, “my house is rather thronged; but if your valiancy would be pleased to ride down to the village, which you may see lying under yonder hill, you will find there all better than a poor man like myself can afford; and faith, to tell the truth, I could not find you room, unless you flocked

with these rascallion blades, who are not fit society for such as you."

"What say you, Leonard?" said the elder, "shall we decamp, or are your teeth in such prime sort that they will e'en try whether our host's provender be better than his promise? For my part, I am too old a soldier, and that devil incarnate, Owen Glendower, (my lawful prince, as some will have it,) has given me too many opportunities of sleeping under the wide expanse of sky to make me particular as to my couch, and the practice I had in the mastication of dog and horse flesh at the siege of Harlech has quite cured me of over-niceness; so, what say you?"

"I," replied Leonard, not having been at that never-to-be-forgotten siege, "am for taking our host's advice, although my bones ache, and my good steed would willingly smell some corn; but if the food we should get here would not be of better quality than the face of our crusty mother there promises, by my faith, we

may, without great sacrifice, make our lowest reverence to the White Hart."

The landlady was about to exercise the privilege of her sex, when a young girl put her head forward, and said, "Simon, the gentleman in the velvet cloak desires your presence."

"And pray, mistress," rejoined the sour-countenanced hostess, "who desired your presence? I thought I had commanded you to remain in your room: so you will have the goodness to trudge. Marry come up! pretty times forsooth, when the landlord of the White Hart is called here and there at the beck and call of every dirty knave who may chance to come to guzzle like a beast at his hostelrie."

As the girl retired, she cast a furtive glance at the strangers, as much as to say, "I know what orders I received, but I have at any rate gratified my curiosity, as a young soldier with a dashing plume is not often to be seen at the White Hart."

"Well, host," resumed Gamme, as he ga-

thered up the reins of his steed, "although it looks black in the west, we wish you a good night, and a happy deliverance from the carousers."

"David," said Leonard, "I have changed my mind; methinks 'twere unwise to tempt our fortune: a storm is rapidly approaching; so, by your leave, here goes;" and without waiting for reply, he jumped from his horse, and led it towards the stable. Gamme slowly followed, although the host remonstrated, protesting he had no provisions for man or horse, no accommodation for either; and, in fact, tried every means to dissuade them from remaining. Leonard, however, was obstinate, and Gamme acquiesced in all his young friend wished.

"Well, sir esquire," said our host, "if you will not take the advice I offer, at any rate let me go and do my best for you, and perhaps I may find you a corner apart from these rioters."

He then led them to a small out-house, in

which he said they might tie their horses, and there await his return.

The moment he was gone, Gamme burst into a loud laugh, and exclaimed, "Leonard, Leonard, when shall I make you worthy of the Earl of March, or fit to be the page of so noble a master. He certainly trusts you in all, and for why I never could see! For, in God's truth, another so scatter-brained a puppy lives not! Why the weathercock is steady when compared with you! Be good enough to let me hear any good reasons for remaining here."

"Fifty, which, most gallant, kind-hearted David, I will soon convince you of; but, first, follow me." Having tethered their horses, Leonard led Gamme into the other stables belonging to the hostelrie, and there they found many steeds covered with warlike trappings, and some of great value.

"David," said Leonard, "do rapsallion blades, according to our host's words, ride

horses such as these? Did you hear the girl talk of the gentleman in the velvet cloak? and again, good David, did you see her face, her eyes, her figure? Why she is a very angel! In fact, David, there is a mystery, and a pretty petticoat, either of which would be sufficient to make Leonard Hastings ride a thousand miles on a bare-backed hackney; much more, then, would it force him to remain, when he thinks he has already ridden enough for the day. I tell you, dear honest David, that the squire of the most noble Earl of March is most deeply in love, and by the turn of that dear little girl's eye, I think it is reciprocal, and, forsooth, why not? We shall see: as if the old mother be sulky, why I will make love to her too, or perhaps, considering she is a little too long in the tooth for me, a friend might manage it instead. As for old Simon, I do not half like him, with his galimathias about no victuals, and rioters. Listen to me, David; I will see

all these good people, and my own dear little girl shall assist me."

"A pretty task, forsooth, you allot to David Gamme," replied he; "knight of forty hard-fought fields to smooth down a rascally adherent of the 'white lion,'* and make love to an old wizened she-dragon, so that a young jack-anapes may have time to talk nonsense to a pretty chamber wench!"

"First, master Gamme," replied the youth, "you will be good enough to bear in mind, that my master is not only one of those rascally adherents of the White Lion, as you are pleased to denominate the followers of the house of *Mortimer*, but is the 'White Lion' himself, and by right your sovereign lord; and although young Harry of Monmouth, by his glorious deeds, and by his kindness to my master, has bound him in the fetters of regard, still he cannot forfeit those claims to the throne which God has given him; and he

* The white lion was the badge of the House of Mortimer.

is blind who does not see that the day will come when the House of Mortimer will resume its rights. Heaven grant it may be without bloodshed !”

“ Well, we will not now fight about right,” answered Gamme ; “ all we know is, that your master, Edmund Earl of March, and my liege lord, Harry of Monmouth, are sworn friends, and if they are rivals in aught, it is in deeds of arms ; and as for ourselves, I am not going to be your rival here, either with the sulky old woman, or that soft-faced thing which your egregious vanity supposes to be a conquest of yours.”

During this conversation our travellers had taken off their heavy trappings, and littered up their horses for the night ; nor did our host seem in any great hurry to return. At length, however, bringing provender for the horses, and a large key in his hand, he made his appearance.

“ I cannot persuade the rioters within to

decamp," said he; "for this night, therefore, (and I crave your pardon,) my *hostelrie* can afford you but sorry lodging." He then led them to a large building, two-thirds of which was occupied by grain, and divided off from the rest of the space by a partition half the height of the chamber. He again left them, but shortly returned with a light and table; and a board was soon spread with all that was necessary to satisfy their immediate cravings. Each time the host retired, he secured the door, saying he could not trust the people he had in the *hostelrie* from intruding on them, more especially as they were none of them in a state of sobriety.

Gamme, whose suspicions were now as fully raised as his young friend's, determined to find out, if possible, by indirect questioning, whether he was correct in considering that all was not as it should be.

"In these times, friend," said Gamme, "do you not find it dangerous to allow your sign to

swing with such a foolish daub on it as that *White Hart*? I can well understand some roisterers from the camp of Harry of Monmouth, making your fair hostelrie a place for a debauch, and, forsooth, thinking themselves in an enemy's country, forgetting to pay their score, and perhaps snatching a kiss from that pretty daughter of yours."

"No daughter of mine," replied Simon; "but I have her in charge; and as for the sign, who cares for the outside of the house, when the inside produces good cheer and ale, and the best of all; and as for Harry of Monmouth, I love Harry, because he (they say) loved a jolly carouse, and his soldiers throw away their siller like a pack of fools."

"Ay! but they lie in their teeth," replied Gamme, "who accuse Harry of Monmouth*

* Late historians have doubted the truth of the stories, which have been too greedily devoured, of the irregularities of Henry the Fifth previous to his ascending the throne. Tyler especially, whose research as to Henry's character

of ever loving a carouse more than is meet for every good soldier; and as for the stories his enemies have trumped up regarding that tun of flesh, Sir John Falstaff, and Bardolph, the captain of the Shrewsbury men, and the like, it was naught but pure invention; and although for a time his noble father believed it, and he was banished the council, it was found to be a lie of the court, jealous of his great renown; and I tell you, friend Simon, that if that is all you love our king for, you have little love for him. And who, pray, are these carousers now in your house? and when do they depart? as, perchance, I might choose to remain here for a day or two."

"Why," replied Simon, "to tell the truth, I know them not; but they are right loyal subjects, though rather noisy withal; but I must go, and see after them, lest in my ab-

appears to have been considerable, entirely acquits the monarch.

sence they should turn the house out of doors. Good night. I will visit you at dawn to-morrow."

Strange to say, Leonard during this colloquy had remained without saying a word, and after his host's departure, rose up in triumph, exclaiming, ' We have him, the old rascal, and his loyal subjects to boot! Before one hour has elapsed I will solve this mystery, and see the fair maid of the White Hart. Now, David, you will perhaps please to assist your friend." Without further parley, he climbed up to the top of the wooden partition before mentioned, just above which was a small window, which looked down into the yard. A light was in the room of the house at the distance of about forty yards, and he plainly discovered eighteen or twenty men sitting round a table, but of course could make out nothing more. On searching amongst a quantity of farming utensils, in the corner of the barn, they found some rope, and Leonard was

determined, with Gamme's assistance, to take his chance from the window.

As, however, Gamme wished greatly to have a little insight into the mysterious circumstances attending their sojourn at the house, he was anxious that Leonard should not go, more especially as in all probability some danger would be incurred should he be discovered; and since Gamme had not much confidence in Leonard's discretion, he determined to go himself.

Leonard would not, however, listen to it; and declared, that if Gamme went, he would go also, and so, in all probability, neither of them could return. He accordingly tied the rope to a post of the partition, and squeezing himself through a small window, without any accident lowered himself to the ground.

The night was so dark, that nothing was to be seen at the smallest possible distance! The storm, which had threatened at their arrival, still hung over them; and the sky presented

one dark mass of clouds. He stealthily approached the house, and when near the window of the room in which he had seen the revellers seated, he found, that although from the height from which he had looked from the opening in the barn he had seen them, that now, being on a lower level, and the shutter closed, nothing was to be seen, and to listen was the only alternative.

He for a moment hesitated, as not altogether confident that the act he was about to perform might be deemed honourable, but when he considered over the suspicious conduct of the landlord, he determined to proceed.

The upper window was also closed, and although he found that he could hear voices in an under-tone, they were not sufficiently distinct to distinguish the words.

At this he was much perplexed ; but on feeling about for something on which to elevate his body to enable him to survey the room, his hand pushed against a plank, which

fell with a startling noise, and the door of the house was immediately opened.

“Who goes there?” was repeated in the host’s name; and when no answer was returned, he continued, “Mary, bring the lantern, and let us see the cause of the noise.” In the meantime four or five men in cloaks, and some evidently of the better class, appeared at the door. It being, however, so dark, Leonard had an opportunity of seeing all, without being himself seen; and to his great surprise, enveloped in one of the cloaks, he recognized the countenance of a page of some nobleman of Henry’s court, but whose master’s name he could not recollect. He now, at all risks, determined to persevere.

“How’s this, Mary,” said Simon; “did I not tell you to make the men remove all the planks from the house to-day, and here’s one thrown down by the wind; what have you to say? Why can’t you obey me, you jade? Think you I pay for your keep year after year

for nothing? What have I ever got by you, except that first bauble, and the promise of great things hereafter? and what are you after all, nothing but a gentleman's bye-blow. I tell you what,—if I dare, I would send you tramping to-morrow."

"Why be harsh to the girl?" said one of those enveloped in the cloak.

"Forgive my forgetfulness, Simon," replied the girl; I would not willingly displease you. Were you but kind to me, you know not how I could repay it."

"Yes I do though. By spending my money in dress, and by looking at every idle chap that comes in with a good surcoat on; because, forsooth, you think they are of your degree. How durst you disobey me to-day, when I had particular reasons for wishing you not to appear; it does not, however, signify, as I have those two nice birds caged, and it will go hard with me if I do not keep them there till they can do no harm."

“Simon, harm them not, I beseech you,” replied the girl; “I will be their guarantee, that they say not they have seen aught extraordinary here.”

“Ay, a pretty guarantee, truly,” said the host. “Come, tramp, girl; and if anything should happen, it will be their own faults. I want not to injure them; but, look ye, young woman,” and, seizing her by the arm, he looked expressively at her, “take heed what you do or say. I brook not interference.” Again he slowly reiterated, “Take heed!”

The girl turned away, and retired into the house. Leonard remained, until at length he observed Mary with a light in another apartment, and, apparently, alone. She opened the casement, and sat looking out at the darkness, seemingly in deep meditation. Leonard, although within a few feet of the place, feared to speak, lest he should arouse the house. At length the sounds within nearly ceased; the girl still sat immersed in thought. Leo-

nard then venturing forward, in an under but distinct voice uttered the name by which he had heard her called.

Starting, she was about to shut the window, when Leonard said, "The travellers."

"Who are you?" hurriedly replied Mary.

"One of the travellers, who *must* gain speech with you," answered Leonard. At this moment the door opened; the candle in Mary's room was extinguished, and six or eight men, enveloped in mantles, proceeded towards the stable, and, on leaving the door, one of them said to the host:

"Recollect, to-morrow evening at eight. It is my will that there be no intruders; look to it; your life depends on your punctual obedience. Should you want aid, St. Clair and Joseph will do your bidding."

"You shall be obeyed, my lord," replied Simon.

Leonard shortly after heard them riding away in different directions. Remaining still

at his post, he soon had the satisfaction of seeing all lights in the house extinguished, and again Mary appeared at the window, or rather her presence was signified by the rustle of her garment. He was once more about to speak, when she said, "Be silent, for your life." She then struck a light, and a small piece of paper, lowered by a string, was eagerly seized upon by Leonard. She then distinctly said, "To-morrow. Now depart without delay." The window was now shut, and the light extinguished. Now, although our young hero was pleased at having so far communicated with his lady love, as he chose in his mind to make her, he was not altogether content at being obliged to suspend his further approaches to the next day; and, in fact, delayed some short time retiring, in hopes of some further intercourse. At length he returned to his barn, and, after a little trouble, succeeded in rejoining his friend.

Gamme during this period had alternately

been accusing himself of allowing his hair-brained friend to go alone, and then hoping that the protracted absence betokened good. When, however, he heard the tramp of horses, he was again bewildered; and, in fact, a few moments before Leonard's reappearance, had meditated following him. Luckily, Mary's light had forced him to suspend his operations, and now he was just as anxious to hear the whole account as Leonard had before been to undertake the enterprise.

"Well, scatterbrains," said Gamme, "did your lady love give you a clout on the pate, or did our old Boniface chase you through the country, or had you to put up with the fair dame whom, in the plenitude of your bounty, you promised to your friend?"

"Who, good David," replied Leonard, "but my lady love would indite for me tender and beautiful lines with her own fair hand? and now you shall have no inkling of what is therein, unless you crave my pardon, and say

I am wiser than you took me for. In the first place, I have discovered that a noble lord was of the party; secondly, that they meet here to-morrow night; and, thirdly, that I shall not stir one foot without Mary's orders; and, fourthly, hold your tongue whilst I con over what she says. So saying, he pulled out a small strip of paper, and read as follows :

“ Traveller, think me not bold for thus addressing you ! Danger awaits you. Show no suspicion, if questioned. I wish to see one of you, as I have much to relate. Leave this place when your doors are opened. At sunset to-morrow evening let one in holy garb come to the Goat's Walk, near the ferry. Peril hangs over his majesty; I have none in whom I can confide. I dare not say more.”

“ Well, friend Gamme,” resumed Leonard, “ what think you of that ? Now suppose, in addition to my other merits, I had not added the especial fondness I have for the petticoat tribe in general, and to Mary in particular;

which latter fondness I was able to imbibe during the peep I had before old Boniface caged his birds, as he said ; but, by-the-bye, I have never related to you yet all my adventures, so here goes."

The relation finished, for a short time Gamme remained silent ; at length he rejoined, " We must move this instant ; as although we are aware of no harm further than temporary imprisonment intended by our host, still it is absolutely necessary for us, as loyal subjects, to hold converse with your pretty Mary as she directs, and therefore one stoup more of wine, and then farewell, good master jailer !"

The rain had now commenced descending in torrents, when our travellers having duly fortified the inward man, dropping from the opening, reached the ground in safety. They proceeded to the out-house, from which they contrived to abstract their horses, then sallied forth ; but the darkness of the night, and their want of knowledge of the road, stopped their

progress; they in consequence halted under a tree, and remaining there until morning dawned, then proceeded to the nearest town. It was there agreed, that in the evening Leonard, in a countryman's disguise, accompanied by Gamme, should proceed to the spot appointed by Mary as the place of meeting, and that the latter should act as vidette whilst the conference took place.

The evening arrived; without difficulty they found the place denominated the Goat's Walk, and since the whole of that part of the country was then a royal chase, and covered with wood, they easily hid themselves and their horses from notice.

Mary soon appeared, driving her little flock of goats before her. She looked cautiously round, and seeing Leonard, beckoned him to follow her. A few paces hid them from the passers by. She paused, as if for the first time conscious of the boldness of the step she had taken. Although Leonard had long forgotten for what purpose he had been summoned, and

thought only of the pretty country girl that was before him, still when she turned, he was awed by her native innocence, and felt only that what he before had deemed a jest, might prove sober earnest, and that the volatile Hastings was likely to be irretrievably desperately in love! He summoned, however, resolution to express his admiration of her pretty face, when hastily interrupting him,—

“Do not mistake me, sir, I came not here to talk idly, but to appeal to you as a loyal man to do your duty by your sovereign; pardon me before I speak, and think me not bold, when I first enquire your name and occupation, as the secret I have to unfold is of too serious a nature to be idly spoken of.”

“With all candour, then, fair maid, my name is Leonard Hastings; page of the Earl of March.”

“I cannot, then, trust you,” resumed Mary; “for though they say that your master is bold and generous, still he comes of that stock who are enemies to our noble monarch.”

“ Still, Mary, I also am a loyal subject : I mean when my master’s orders do not interfere.”

“ Sir page, I cannot trust you ; for although your face bespeaks honesty, and although I could almost vouch for your faith,”——

“ God bless you, dear Mary, for that word,” hastily interrupted Leonard ; “ and, by my faith, if honesty and virtue were ever known by the countenance, I would not only vouch for your’s, but give up mine to your keeping. Mary, I am page to the rightful heir to the English throne, but he waives his right ; whilst Henry of Monmouth lives, he is his truest friend, and most loyal subject ; and (taking her hand) you wrong me, Mary ; I am equally a true subject, nor shall you e’er have reason to doubt my faith. Trust me, then ; I here promise and swear to obey your commands ; or should my sovereign be in danger, use my utmost exertions in his behalf.”

“ I will trust you, then,” replied the girl ;
“ but your friend—who is he ?”

“ The well-known David Gamme,” replied Leonard.

“ What,” replied Mary, “ the famous Welchman, whose name is in the mouth of every young esquire when he dons his casque for the battle-field?”

“ The same,” answered Hastings.

“ Now I should have,” resumed Mary, “ sufficient guarantee had you pleaded naught else to win my confidence. But before I speak, I demand one pledge : that in whatever happens in this matter, the life may be spared of your not very hospitable host, my guardian. He is not my father, as all here know ; and although he is far from kind to me, still here have I spent the years of my childhood, and nothing will I say until I have exacted this pledge.”

“ In every thing, Mary, your words are law to me,” rejoined Hastings ; “ and I equally pledge myself that should Simon be implicated in this mystery, my master shall save him from the extreme rigour of the law.”

“ Enough ! You know,” resumed Mary,

“ that on your arrival yesterday a party of revellers (for which my guardian, Simon, wished to pass them off,) occupied the house. Who they are, I know not; but as they frequently have met here, I have, by words I have heard dropped, discovered that they are for the most part of gentle birth, and that they plot treason against the king. One only name I know, but he has this day departed, for (as I heard him say) the Welch borders—one Davy Howell.”

“ A sworn colleague,” interrupted Leonard, “ of that arch-rebel Owen Glendower.”

“ All the others,” continued Mary, “ are, I am confident, addressed by feigned names: one styles himself Jock Barleycorn, and, in truth, Jock Barleycorn has more gilding on his doublet than would suit a modest earl; (if, in truth, there be such a thing). You know the room where they meet, but unless accident should favour you, there is no method which I can recommend to give you a chance of discovering

their designs. Farewell, then, for the present. I trust to your honour and loyalty."

"Hold, one moment, dear Mary; tell me why you are apparently so deeply interested in your king; why do the lips of a country girl teach me to reverence loyalty?"

"Young man, we are as yet but strangers to each other, and to tell you why loyalty with me is a strong feeling, is to go over a history of my own private affairs, which, had I time to relate, could be of no interest to you; but we have other and more weighty matters to think of, and promptly to act on."

"For the present, then, Mary, farewell; but do not suppose that aught of your life could be of little interest to me. God bless you, Mary!" They then parted; she pursued her way with her goats, whilst Leonard rejoined Gamme.

During Leonard's absence, some horsemen had passed near the spot where Gamme was standing, but all were so muffled in cloaks that he could recognize none of their features; they

were evidently bending their way to Simon's house. A council of war was now held by our travellers, as to what course to pursue. It was then decided that Leonard, disguised as a peasant, (in which dress he had come to the rendezvous), should remain, and loitering about, should trust to fortune to assist him for any discoveries he might make: whilst Gamme should ride to Ringwood, which was the nearest military post, and procure a few men to secure the party.

CHAPTER II.

England ne'er had a king until his time,
Virtue he had deserving to command,
His brandish'd sword did blind men with its beams;
He was a king bless'd of the King of kings.

SHAKSPEARE.

THE state of England at this time was more settled than it had been for many years. From 1399, when Henry the Fourth, partly by the voice of the people, partly obeying the dictates of his own ambitious mind, usurped the crown; or rather, when he assumed that throne from which Richard the Second, owing to his misgovernment and imbecility, was ejected by the almost unanimous desire of the nation; from that period to the death of Henry the

Fourth, there had been a constant succession of plots; for although when Henry of Bolinbroke, the present son of John of Gaunt, he was most popular, still the harsh measures which he had been forced to adopt to check the unbridled licence of the greater nobles, (of whom some were possessed of more power than it was safe for subjects to hold,) alienated numbers; and plot after plot, in rapid succession, obliging still greater severity, added to this alienation. In addition to these grounds of trouble, the Scots were perpetually making inroads, and devastating the border counties; and the Welch, headed by their gallant prince, Owen Glendower, for years had set the power of England at defiance. Some few of the Welch, disgusted by the enormities committed by the mountaineers, still retained their allegiance to England; but, in most cases, their lands had been overrun by their countrymen, and all that did not side with Owen Glendower, were given over to the tender mercies of his wild hordes, who destroyed every thing

by fire and sword ; nor age nor sex was spared ; and that which formerly was a smiling garden, now became a barren waste.

The feelings, nevertheless, which operated powerfully against Henry the Fourth, existed in but a slight degree against his son Henry of Monmouth. This young prince had, even from the tender age of fourteen, been engaged in the active duties of a military life, and had long ere he reached the throne gained the hearts of all by his affability, generosity, and courage. From his boyhood he was in dangers and difficulties ; and perhaps the habit thus early acquired of thought and reliance on his own energy, rendered him what he shortly became, the most able monarch in Europe.

The original cause which led to the dethronement of Richard the Second, was the injustice perpetrated by him in banishing from the kingdom the Earl of Hereford, afterwards Henry the Fourth ; so Richard feeling that he was acting unjustly, kept as a hostage by him Henry of Monmouth. When

he went to Ireland, in the same year in which he was driven from his throne, he took this young prince with him. Again, after delaying, through imbecility of purpose, eighteen precious days in Ireland after Bolinbroke's landing at Ravenspur, he did sail for England, he left young Henry as a sort of prisoner in the castle of Trym.

It appears that young Henry was much attached to him, and when he in after-years came to the throne, the remains of Richard were by his orders exhumed, and funeral honours on a splendid scale were paid to his memory.

In 1401, Henry, then only fourteen years old, marched against Owen Glendower and the Welch, and from that period until the year before he mounted the throne, he was constantly employed in war against that nation. His education, therefore, must have been acquired previous to his fourteenth year, and still never king mounted a throne with mind more expanded, or in whom defects in educa-

tion were less visible. His mind was powerful as his body ; bold in battle, energetic in council, most clement in victory. If Henry of Bolinbroke's was usurpation, time had to a degree sanctified the cause, and Henry of Monmouth ascended the throne to the general content of the nation.

All his first acts were acts of clemency, and of oblivion of past offences ; and the rancorous feelings engendered by the (from necessity stern rule of the father, died away before the mildness of the son.

One of his firmest friends was the young Earl of March, whose right to the throne was certainly superior to his own. The different claims stood thus : Henry the Fifth was grandson to John of Gaunt, fourth son of Edward the Third ; whilst the Earl of March was descended from Lionel, Duke of Clarence, third son of that same monarch ; nothing, therefore, could be clearer than his right. In addition, he had been recognized by the parliament rightful heir, in default of issue, from

Richard the Second ; but the Earl of March knew that to claim his right would give up his native country to devastation and the horrors of civil war ; that the Welch, Scotch, and French would each pour troops into the kingdom, and that even then he had but little chance of success, owing to the energetic and popular character of the reigning monarch. In addition to all this, Henry had behaved in the noblest and most generous manner towards him : had thrown aside every feeling of jealousy, and had made him his warmest friend—rivals only in the field of battle. Here both shone pre-eminent. The Earl of March had, however, spent a portion of his boyhood in the camp of Henry's former antagonist, Owen Glendower, titular Prince of Wales. He taking prisoner, in a battle fought near his own palace of Glendowry, Sir Edmund Mortimer, uncle of March, married Mortimer to one of his daughters, and reconciled him to the Welchman. Young March frequently visited his uncle, and although he was then too

young to join in the predatory incursions, and the gallant forays which were daily carrying on against the English, still it was impossible not to sympathize with the brave individual who for years preserved his country from the yoke of England. Sir Edmund still remained in Wales, and although on the decline of the cause of Glendower he had received his pardon from the king, chose not to venture to court; or even had he so desired, his time of life required repose. As for Glendower himself, he was wandering a fugitive with a price set on his head, and his party almost extinct.

CHAPTER III.

Rebellion ! foul dishonouring word,
Whose wrongful blight so oft has stained
The holiest cause that tongue or sword
Of mortal ever lost or gain'd !
How many a spirit, born to bless,
Hath sunk beneath that withering name,
Whom but an hour, a day's success,
Had wafted to eternal fame.

LALLA ROOKH.

ABOUT the time at which occurred the events detailed in the first chapter, riding along the sea-girt rocks of Merioneth was to be seen, as evening approached, a knight cased in the armour of the period, and his horse equally caparisoned for the fight; for although the

country through which he rode appeared but little adapted to such accoutrements, still such were the times, that in the wild and only half-subdued mountains of Wales, he was a madman who ventured forth, unless prepared to do battle. Our knight appeared about twenty years of age, but something in his deportment, and in the manner in which he managed his fiery steed, showed that this was not his novice in arms. Above the middle size, his strikingly handsome countenance had in it an air which betokened the gentlest birth. Apparently well acquainted with all the passes in this mountainous region, he only doubted of his road when at last he found himself on a cliff overhanging the sea ; short, however, was his hesitation. In a small thicket, a little apart from the precipice, he tied his horse, and returning to the spot cautiously descended ; after a time he paused at a ledge of rock, and putting a bugle to his mouth, from cliff to cliff reverberated the (in Wales then well-known) rallying call of the Mortimers. But a

few minutes had elapsed, when a man lower in the rock appeared, and looking cautiously around, soon espied the knight. He retired, but shortly returned, accompanied by one whose grey locks and dimmed orbs gave token of extreme old age. The former brought a ladder, which he placed against the ledge where the knight had halted; rapidly descending, he followed his conductors, and they were soon out of sight of any who might have been on the cliff.

“How fares your master, Gryffydd?” said the stranger, addressing the old man.

“Indifferently, most noble Earl of March,” replied the guide; “misery has almost done that which ten years’ perpetual war could not effect; and was it not that that more than angel, Lady Constance, tended still to render life precious to him, long ere this, weary of existence, his impetuous valour would have given him up to the steel of his enemies.”

“And,” said March, “she still attends him in all his dangers and wanderings?”

“Ay,” replied Gryffydd: “and whilst there remain a harp in Wales, or whilst virtue and excellence are honoured in the world, so long will Lady Constance be the proud theme of the Welchman’s song; so long will the name of the maid be celebrated who gave up the pomp of a court, and who endured daily peril and fatigue, to soothe the last days of the old warrior.”

At this moment they reached a thorny spot, and Gryffydd desired the Earl of March to follow their example; they now laid themselves down on their faces, and crawling along for some twenty paces once more emerged on a small grassy platform, at the termination of which appeared a cave in the rock. At the mouth of the cave was a small bench, on which sat a man past the prime of life: but his grey hair and furrowed cheeks showed more the effects of care and toil than of extreme age. His height was far above the ordinary standard, whilst his Herculean frame was surmounted with a brow more stern than pleas-

ing; and although his garb was that of the Welch peasant, still nobility was too strongly marked in his appearance for any disguise perfectly to conceal the truth.

Sitting on the grass at his feet was a slight female figure, over which scarcely sixteen winters had passed; the expressive, but still pensively sweet expression of her countenance contrasted strangely with the sternness of the old man, and the coarse peasant dress with the delicate hand and soft beauty of the wearer.

When Gryffydd and March appeared, the old man made no movement, but the girl instantly recognizing the latter, sprang to her feet, and offering her hand, said, "This is kind, Edm—, I mean Earl of March."

"And why not Edmund, my little Constance? Have five years' absence so totally changed the playfellow of your childhood, or because I buckle on the armour which the times oblige, instead of the hunter's garb, which at Glendowry I was wont to wear, am I to be treated coldly, like a new acquaintance?"

“ No, Edmund ; but times have changed, and the Earl of March is now the usurper’s friend, and therefore our enemy.”

“ Never thine, Constance,” replied March.

During this short colloquy, the old man had risen from his seat, and now said, “ Welcome, Earl of March, to the regal palace of Owen Glendower, Prince of Wales ; and although our court is not quite as brilliant as when young Edmund Mortimer first visited Glendowry, still welcome, I say, to the heir to the crown of Richard the Second ; welcome to the only rightful king of England. If I have suffered, young man, it was partly for your house ; and although when hope was gone of seeing the usurper driven from his throne, when my lawful sovereign was foully murdered, I threw off my allegiance to England, and proclaimed the freedom of my country ; still, was to-morrow the Earl of March (whom report says is renegade to his blood,) to throw off the usurper’s yoke, and disdain his friendship, once again would old Glendower appear in the battle-field,

and cheer on his brave Welchmen for the rights of the House of Mortimer ; but where, alas, are they now ? my gallant countrymen ! The Englishman has destroyed our smiling towns and hamlets, despoiled us of our goods, our nobles slain ; in every province an Englishman, or, what is worse, a renegade Welchman, squeezes the uttermost penny from the hapless cottier to assist the ambition of this scion of Lancaster ! ay ; and what am I ? I, who a few years back met on equal terms this Henry of Monmouth in the field ? I, for whom every Welchman would have shed his heart's best blood, what have I now ? My castle of Glendowry burnt to the ground : my wife and children captives in the Tower ; my chieftains, my friends, my relations, all perished in the field, or on the scaffold : a price set on my head ; and nothing left from the House of Glendowry, save this old harper and this blessed child ; but whilst she remains, old Owen can scarce repine, as if worth and excellence is rewarded in this world, what will be her recompense ?

Approach me, my child. Constance, your old grandfather thanks and blesses you. Had it not been for thy presence, long since that ocean which rolls beneath us would have engulfed within its bosom Owen Glendower."

"With gratitude," replied Constance, "I receive, my dearest grandfather, your blessings; but for thanks, have I not my poor mother's dying request to prompt me to act as I do? When at the fatal siege of Caernarvon my father perished, and my mother from watching over his wounded and exhausted frame fell also another victim, can I ever forget her last words, when her head hung on her daughter's arm? 'Remember, Constance, my poor father; unless he forces you to leave him, desert him not in his afflictions; for I see days of misery approaching; my poor countrymen will be hunted like the beasts of the forest; the bloodhound will search out the retreat of Wales' last patriot. Be as a daughter to him, my Constance, and the spirit of your mother shall watch over you.' She never spoke more; and

I, left an orphan, found in you, my kind grandfather, more than a mother's care, a father's love. And would not your Constance be worse than ungrateful to forget all this? And think not I begrudge that which you would call a sacrifice. I should be happy, entirely happy, could I but see you smile as you did in brighter days."

Owen kissed her brow, and replied, "Constance, could memory be still, I might be happy yet; but there is a black array of death and desolation against my name; and since I have failed, history will brand me with the title of barbarian, plunderer, and rebel; when, had I been victorious, the laurel of the patriot would have encircled my brows, and the name of Owen Glendower would have stood by the side of those who have gloriously freed their countries from a tyrannical yoke; but still I hope for Wallace's fame, that I may long live in the recollection of my countrymen, and that my tomb may be embalmed with the tears of all true patriots. But come, Earl of

March, we will not talk of our own griefs, but you shall give us an account of the usurper's court, and tell what new usurpations he meditates by the great array now marshalling in his southern provinces."

"The night dews are falling, my grandfather," interrupted Constance; "let us retire to the retreat still left us."

"True, Constance," replied Glendower. "Shew then our guest to the banqueting hall, which his friend, Henry of Monmouth, permits to Owen Glendower; but when I say permission, I am wrong; as even from this cave his myrmidons would tear him, if Welch fidelity was not proof against English gold."

They entered the cave, where had been prepared their evening meal. An oil lamp hung against the wall, which threw light on the table, but not sufficient to see clearly the dimensions of the cave. It was evidently divided into two or three compartments, and afforded an excellent retreat for the small party by whom it was occupied. On the table was

spread a coarse cloth, with some brown bread and eggs, which, with a bottle of metheglin, formed the total of this luxurious banquet.

March now took off his helmet and armour, and, when disencumbered, perhaps England could not have produced more perfect symmetry, or a nobler countenance. Even old Glendower could not help exclaiming, "Truly, Constance, our cousin of March will not do discredit to the House of Mortimer, although I should love better to see the broom-cod* of the Plantagenets, or the White Hart of Richard, surmount his crest."

Constance blushed when she cast a furtive glance on the Earl, and an observant spectator might have guessed that she was as fully sensible of the fact, and, perhaps, not less interested in the matter than her grandfather.

"It is long, Earl of March, since last we met," resumed Glendower; "'twas, as I think, on the sixth anniversary of the fatal field of

* The *planta gemista*, or broom, was the peculiar badge of the Plantagenets.

Shrewsbury, where, had the fiery spirit of Hotspur allowed his maturer judgment to guide, and to delay but two days, how different would have been the result. My brave Welchmen were then, as you have often heard, but thirty miles from the field, and had we joined our forces to those of Hotspur, the House of Lancaster had fallen to rise no more, and you would now have ruled over England, instead of being a suppliant at a usurper's court."

"Say not so, Glendower," interrupted March; "I am no suppliant. Could I regain the throne of my ancestors without destroying this realm, how soon would I proclaim my right, and raise the standard of our house; or even were Harry of Monmouth a tyrant: but no; did I now raise that standard, I should only bring destruction on my country, death on the scaffold to all my dearest friends. No, Harry of Monmouth *must* reign, and in deeds of arms alone will I be his rival, in fighting for the just rights of England and her crown. Harry of Monmouth has claimed the crown of France;

all England is now hurrying to its southern shores to support his right. Never was war more popular in England, never was confidence in a ruler deeper rooted than that which is placed by the nation in their young king. You who for years have been his mortal foe, you who have received at his hands more injury than from the rest of England combined, will testify to his virtues; to his valour, when as quite a boy he saved his father's life at the battle of Shrewsbury, and in fifty hard-fought fields when opposed to you, Glendower; to his clemency, which stood often between his stern father and his revenge; to his entire disregard of self, for the sake of his native land and the cause for which he fought: when, for instance, as you recollect, just before the battle of Grosmont, he pawned his jewels and all he had, to feed his soldiery. And what know I of him, but that the moment he came to the throne, instead of forcing me to pass my days in ignoble ease, to which I had been destined by his father, he gave me the place next

himself? he forced me by benefits to be his friend, and he only called on me as a true Englishman to draw the sword for my country. I will prove to him of what gratitude is capable; and Harry of Monmouth shall bless the day that made him sue for March's friendship. Before the walls of Harfleur our rivalry shall first commence; and when proud France shall feel the might of England, when her sons shall fall before our swords, a Monmouth shall not be the only cry, but Paris and a Mortimer shall be associate sounds; and England shall acknowledge that if a Monmouth reigns, still Clarence's descendant is not degenerate. But pardon, dear Constance, my folly. I recollected not when my hot blood had borne me to the battle-field, when I was in thought attempting to rival Harry of Monmouth, the pain I might cause; but although the brave De Hugueville was your father, still this is your native land, the land of your choice; and although Wales and France for a few years have combined, was it always so? how oft

have Welch and English as brothers combated proud France? and now do not our ranks teem with gallant Welchmen? and even your grandfather, assisted as he has been in his struggles against England by the power of France, does he not almost as much fear their friendship as their hate? In what state now is France? An imbecile king, ruled alternately by the factions of Orleans and Burgundy, with whom murder and treachery are familiar; whose shameless debaucheries and tyranny disgrace the age in which they live! A queen!—but I will not bring the blush to your pure cheek by speaking of that which even France herself blushes to acknowledge!”

“Still, Edmund, ’tis the country of my dearest father, the country that he adored; and although France has no charms for me, still, was I ever forced to quit my own native Welch hills, France should be my refuge. Friends I have many in France; but, perhaps, for none have I much esteem, except for my uncle De L’isle Adam, who was so kind to

me and my poor mother when on the second occasion my father without his wife or child was sent with troops to assist my grandfather in his struggles with Henry of Monmouth. For my sake, Edmund, for the sake of your little playmate, restrain your arm should my gallant old uncle meet you in the field. One more friend I had, but she perhaps has now ceased to think of her young playfellow : I mean the Princess Katherine. As children we were much together ; and although pomp and the vanities of a court may have driven Constance de Hugueville out of the recollection of Katherine, I never can forget her ; as when a child, if ever there was true amiability on earth, 'twas to be found in Katherine of Valois ! She now has grown a noble woman, beautiful as aught in France ; and although factions tear the court, and vice in every shape walks about without disguise, report says that all look up to her as a model of all that is pure and excellent in woman !”

“ Is it true, Earl of March, that our old

antagonist claims the hand of this fair maid?" interrupted Glendower.

"Most true is it," replied March, "that policy and the good of his native land has driven him to this resolve, but in it love has no share; as although Henry's enemies have ever slandered his fair fame by accusing him of wild irregularities of every sort, still, since first he took up his sword, naught but glory and the love of his country has occupied his mind; for love he has had no room in his breast. Nothing can more truly demonstrate the virulence of faction than that these falsehoods are believed. The only story for which there was ever the smallest foundation was that already so much celebrated, and which, like many other falsehoods, in all probability will appear in historical record: I mean that in which he is represented as resisting the authority of Chief Justice Gascoigne on the Bench. But although it is true that resistance was made, and that he was present, his brothers Thomas and John and their associates

were the culprits. But to return to our theme: if Constance will let us talk on matters more fit for warriors than maiden's ears."

"Indeed, Edmund, I have been so mixed up with warriors and battles, and dangers all my life, that only that now and then my grandfather's exhortation of 'Courage, Constance,' has shown me that I am a silly girl, I could have almost fancied myself one of the warriors you talk of; and as for sieges, I have seen more than you have, notwithstanding your gallant bearing. But now all is past, and here am I, Constance de Hugueville, head dairymaid, and occasionally cuisinière, to my own dear grandfather, more proud and more happy, if I see a smile on his countenance, than were I first lady at the court of Katherine of France, as, by-the-bye, she (so says my uncle L'Isle Adam) desired to make me. We have now been here seven days, and either no one now is at pains to seek out the Prince of Wales, or else France, and France only, is the cry; as for two years, during which time

we have wandered together, we have never yet before had four days tranquillity. I often try to persuade my grandfather to visit my father's land, but he prefers day after day risking his life in his native hills, to the safety of a foreign country, and to the honours which would be poured on him by the King of France. But now that I have interrupted you so unseasonably, and as I see my grandfather all anxiety for your news, pray tell him further of Katherine and Monmouth."

March resumed. "Previous to the proclamation of war, the Bishop of Durham and others were sent to France with certain proposals. Archbishop Chicheley had much influence in turning the king towards the boldest measures; as from what source he gained his ideas it is unknown, still he feared that Henry purposed the dissolution of some of the abbeys, whose members were not worthy of the creed they professed, and he endeavoured to give Henry's mind occupation sufficient to divert it from the channel into which he feared it en-

tering. On arriving, therefore, at the French court, the Bishop, in the name of Henry, laid claim to the throne of France; but as they would not listen to terms such as these, the bishop for the present waived the claim, but without prejudice to its resumption at any future period. He now declared that if the French king desired peace, he must surrender in sovereignty to England, Normandy, and Brittany, with the Earldoms of Anjou and Flanders, Aquitain, and all other possessions ceded to Edward the Third by the treaty of Bretigny. That the arrears for the ransom of King John, which amount to one million five hundred thousand crowns, should be paid, and that should all these points be ceded, the King of England would then marry Katherine, she bringing with her two million crowns in dowry.

“ The latter part was certainly not flattering to the vanity of (they say) the handsomest princess in Europe. The French court, torn by faction, although they rejected these terms,

still offered Angouleme, Bayonne, and other small territories. And that as regarded the marriage, they would give eight hundred thousand crowns besides her jewels with the princess. The bishop had no authority to alter the terms proposed.

“ For the French court to have acceded to these terms was in fact to render France entirely subservient to England, and still a great portion of it was just, if we are to understand that the treaties made with Edward the Black Prince were valid. On the return of the bishop to England, Henry would listen to no modification, and I am certain, from his determined character, that if even he were reduced to but a handful of men, surrounded as Edward was at Crecy by the whole host of France, he would require the same terms. Such is the man, and such the leader under whom England now pants to be led on !”

“ Happy, happy Harry Monmouth !” ejaculated Glendower. “ Would to heaven, March, that you were in possession of your right, then,

perhaps, would Glendower raise his standard, and bring his gallant array of Welchmen to assist the island cause, nor should they be laggards in the field ; but, alas ! never, never more will the old chieftain hear the war-cry of his country. Ah ! could I but see one more combat such as that at Bringlass, could I once more hear the piper's blast, and the glorious shout of ' Wales and victory,' I could die content. But no, 'tis past ; and the Prince of Wales is naught but a rebel outcast !"—The old man put his hands over his face as if to hide the deep emotion which almost unmanned him,—and March continued :

" France of necessity refused this treaty, and all breathes war ! The spirit of Henry is infused into the breasts of the chivalry of England, and even the lowliest of her sons feels that he must be a hero, because he is Monmouth's soldier."

" The greater the name of Monmouth," resumed Glendower, " the more bitter is my hate ; but useless I see it is to attempt to

arouse the pride of the Earl of March : he is already the slave of him who should be his subject."

" Say not so, Glendower," rejoined March ; " gratitude and my country's good are the fetters which restrain me."

" My young friend," interrupted Glendower, pardon hasty words spoken from the wretchedness of my heart, which from the extent of my woes has grown misanthropic. I have wronged you,—here is my hand ; and, recollect, should the Earl of March e'er find that Henry is his foe, should he hereafter deem that with too great facility he resigned his rights, and should raise the standard of the House of Mortimer, let him send this token to Glendower (taking a ring from his hand and placing it on the finger of March) ; and although now poor and a price set on his head, he still has friends, though the tyrant rule of England renders friendship to Glendower treason."

Whilst thus speaking, a single note from a bugle was heard. Glendower started, as if the

sound was one which conveyed pleasure to his mind. Shortly Gryffydd entered, and speaking a few words in an under-tone to his master, the latter rose, and having desired Constance to act as hostess, left the cave.

Constance slightly blushed at being thus left with the earl, with whom although distantly connected, and when children much together, she had for some years had no correspondence, and in both that period had wrought a surprising change. Quickly, however, recovering herself, she enquired as to his reason for visiting Wales, when all other English nobles were marching their retainers to the field.

“ You are right, fair Constance, to ask why March is away when England is in arms, but of this hereafter. First answer my questioning, although in courtesy a lady should take precedence. Are you, Constance, the depositor of your grandfather’s plans and secrets, or is he still the wild chieftain who looked on women merely as the handmaids of the lords of the creation, and trusted naught to their keeping?”

“ In all,” she replied, “ that it is right that I should know, my grandfather confides in me. I know his plans and resolves ; but without his sanction, Edmund, you would not wish me to speak ?”

“ No, Constance, I would not wish you to do aught that honour forbid ; but I think I can show you that in this case your love for your grandfather should oblige you freely to speak. I will, therefore, to satisfy your scruples, answer your first question. I have lately quitted the king at Southampton, and so perfectly does the open heart of Henry reject all the unworthy suspicions which some of his courtiers attempt to instil into his mind, that in all matters the most confidential I am now chosen as his ambassador. I am here, Constance, by his desire. He was fully aware that owing to my former connexion with Glendower, and with the Welch, that I could best further his views of peace and clemency towards his enemies in this country. I myself informed him that I thought I could even hold

communication with Glendower, and I have a private offer of pardon for him, with certain terms annexed to it,"

"I pray," replied Constance, "that you may be successful: but I fear me much it is impossible."

"But, tell me," resumed March, "are you ever to wander thus in difficulties, privations, and dangers; or has Glendower proposed to himself any plan of escape, and eventually a permanent retreat?"

"Friends he has," answered Constance, "in Herefordshire; but how he is to gain this retreat, and even when there, in whom can he have perfect trust? His friends day by day fall off from him, and some of those whom most he trusted have plotted treason in his very camp. My dear grandfather loves me more, I believe, than aught on earth, and so long as he wanders and permits me to accompany him, so long will I remain. Brighter days may arrive. Was Robert Bruce in a better state when chased through the wild

fastnesses of Breadalbane by the savage Lorn? of his brothers, wife, children, some had perished on the scaffold or by the sword; the others scattered as the winds of heaven, or in the hands of the cruel De Valance. So with Glendower, his wife and children, in the power of England's king. Bruce lived, and Glendower lives, in the hearts of their respective countrymen—may the issue be the same. May Constance de Hugueville only live to see that day! ah, how contentedly would she then resign her breath; for happiness is not of this world." Saying this, she reverentially bent her head and kissed the black cross which was suspended from her neck.

March looked at her, and thought nothing he had ever seen was to be compared in beauty; and although in former times his little playmate was dear to him, he was aware that his feelings now were of a far different nature, and he trembled mentally when he considered of the dangers that she was daily running. Whilst these thoughts were revolv-

ing in his mind, and his glance was fixed in silent admiration on her expressive countenance, she suddenly looked up, and catching the peculiar regard, averted hastily her eyes, and rising from her seat, said confusedly, "I will seek my grandfather, Edmund, as he may——"

But March hastily interrupted her: "Why, Constance, do you fear Edmund Mortimer? is he different now from your happy companion of former days; or because the Earl of March has donned the casque, is he to be regarded with less kindly feelings by Constance de Hugueville?"

"No, Edmund; how can I forget your kindness to me when together we were children? Who, when Glendower marshalled his last gallant array accompanied me, when I trembled at the sight of arms, but you? Who when, my foot slipping, I fell into the rapid Dee, regardless of danger, dashed into the stream to my aid, but my little gallant cousin? (as I then called you)."

March affectionately took her hand, and was about to answer, when Glendower stepped into the cave. Perhaps his appearance was ill-timed; whether Constance thought it a relief or not, it is not easy to judge; at any rate, March would have given half another kingdom, had he had it to bestow, to have found Glendower some fresh occupation; however, it is a remarkable fact, that, in novels, ay, and real life too, fathers, grandfathers, aunts and uncles, always are sure to walk in at the most mal-a-propos moments, and many a son or nephew (I am afraid) has mentally consigned his venerable parent or respected uncle to a much lower situation than the Ogan Owain, as is now called Glendower's Cave in Merionethshire.

“Retire to rest, my dear child,” said Owen on entering the cave, “and gain that strength which will soon be required. Fresh troubles await us To-morrow's dawn must see us some leagues from this retreat. For you, sir earl, I have much for your private ear; and then

St. David speed you on your journey, as although inhospitable it may appear; you must on this night."

Constance, although secretly perhaps she objected to this private conference, which prevented further communion with her newly-recovered connexion, was still sure by Glendower's manner that her absence was necessary; she accordingly went up to her grandfather, and kneeling at his feet, received his kiss and solemn blessing; then frankly offering her hand to March, she said, "Farewell, Edmund, may God protect you; and if you regard the friendship of Constance de Hugueville, be the firm and constant friend of Owen Glendower."

"Constance," replied March, "it needed not this to make me the friend of him whose former kindnesses I can ne'er forget. If I bend the bow or hurl the lance, or wield the battle-axe, 'tis Glendower's teaching. Who made me glory in the sound of battle but the harper of Wales, singing of Glendower's fame?

Who taught me in my boyhood that honour was the only true nobility, but Glendower? Who gave me Constance to protect in the chase over the heather-bound hills, and who made me promise ever in after-life to defend her if in danger, but Owen Glendower? I owe him a debt of gratitude which never can I sufficiently repay. If this will gain your friendship, it is no very severe task. May heaven watch over you, Constance, in the dangers you are running: and when you think (if on him you ever deign a thought) of Edmund Mortimer, regard him as your grandfather's warmest friend: forget not the claim you have on him as your cousin, and that with which Glendower invested him. He will never forget it." Pressing her hand slightly as he spoke, their eyes once more met; again he said "Farewell;" and Constance felt that to her he was more than cousin.

When she retired to the inner cave, in which, covered by the skins of the mountain goat, her rough bed of straw was spread, in

vain for some time she attempted to compose her mind, or to find that rest which she knew was necessary to strengthen her for the new fatigues she was about to encounter. She thought over every word that she had uttered, fearful lest she might have said aught too expressive of what she then was ignorant of, but now too truly knew—that with all her future dreams of happiness Edmund must be associate. She then conned over every syllable he had breathed; the tone of voice in which uttered: she brought back to her mind the affectionate look with which he regarded her when they parted; still as an attached friend he might have acted in a similar manner. She then reflected on the perils he was about to run, as she knew that to none in the field would he yield in daring; his name, young as he was, already was coupled with gallant deeds. She thought of the splendid court of Henry, and felt sure that of all eyes he must be the cynosure, and that the noblest maids in England would be emulous of his love.

But again, when her mind reverted to him as the gallant Earl of March rivalling his king in the field of battle, when in thought she heard the applause of England showered on his head, she gloried in the feelings her heart acknowledged ; she was soothed ; the tears of pleasure flowed down her cheeks, and whilst breathing a prayer for him, from mental exhaustion she slept.

CHAPTER IV.

—————"The game's afoot—

Follow your spirit : and upon this charge

Cry—God for Harry! England! and St. George!"

SHAKESPEARE.

At the time we speak of, Ringwood was as it now is, a town generally without garrison of any kind; but as the facility for provisioning troops was small in this district of Hampshire, the armament Henry was collecting was scattered over the various towns and villages in the vicinity of the grand rendezvous, Southampton.

Gamme reached it before nightfall, and proceeding to the commandant, found him at

the hostelrie engaged, as was then much the custom, in administering what he termed justice between the soldiery and the townsfolk ; that is to say, in ordering the latter to keep the soldier in everything, and the soldier not to exact much more than was his right. Henry, however, had already established a great reform in the (what is now termed) billeting of his soldiers. Before his time those who were supposed hostile to the reigning monarch, or against whom the great dignity of the town or hamlet bore any ill-will, was saddled with a host of brawling troops, who paid for nothing, wasted the unfortunate wight's substance, and in all probability maltreated each individual, both male and female, in the establishment. King Henry enacted that each should bear his proportional share ; and it was his custom to walk round the different billets of the soldiers, and see that justice was done to all parties.

The officer in command was termed Sir Roger Trevor, or, more commonly, the Squire

of Briersley, who for the first time, at the age of fifty-six, had donned his martial garb. From his youth he had remained in his native Cornwall, but when all the chivalry of England was summoned by Henry and when he found that a foreign enemy, not a domestic, such as he termed the Welch, was to be met, he kissed his old maiden sister Deborah, and telling Gregory, the old steward, to look after the cows, the iron mine, and his sister, started on his faithful mare, who had never till this day seen aught more warlike than his master's cheese knife when occupied in his usual mid-day operation under some shady elm. The carts and the ploughs of Briersley were all unhorsed, and those that guided them along the furrows or roads now started to the amount of twenty spears, filled with martial ardour and Briersley beer: and when the good squire sallied forth, great was the admiration of the girls of Briersley. Many a heart was this day irretrievably lost; and although one gallant knight looked more like

the picture of Ajax in Homer travestied than one of those starting with the fell intent of overthrowing the chivalry of France, still the worthy Deborah was right proud of her brother, and thought, I believe, the same of Henry as respected her valiant brother, as did Master Apollo Johnson of one of King Henry's successors in our own times, when he expresses himself thus beautifully, "King George nebber fear while brave Badian tand tiff."

Such as he was, however, he held command at Ringwood, and into his presence our knight was ushered. He found him in the midst of a most eloquent harangue, from the tenor of which it was evident that the former justice of the peace was sunk in the soldier; and when dispensing justice for the benefit of the householder, it appeared rather like a requisition for more military muniments for his twenty spears than the pronouncing a judgment on culprits who had laid rather too violent hands on both master and goods. When, however, his eye fell on David Gamme, he exclaimed :

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“ My spear and bacinet ! good Robert, I see by this messenger our king requires our presence at Southampton. He has heard of the Briersley spears. Deborah was right when she said that our fame would soon not belie our appearance, and that Cornwall would rejoice in her sons. What cheer, sir esquire? Has Monmouth sent his orders for our march ?”

“ Not quite so,” replied Gamme, who could scarce restrain a smile; “ but you are required for the service of his majesty, and I counsel that your men may instantly mount, as my errand proposes work which will not brook delay. In the meantime one word for your private ear.”

“ Robert,” said Sir Roger, “ go sound the Briersley call: assemble and marshal our host; let Joan be prepared, and, hark’e, forget not to sling the muniments of war, both dry and wet. We soldiers, you know, friend Gamme, must look to the inward man if we desire to do good service to our country.”

During this speech they had proceeded to an inner room, where David briefly explained

what had occurred, and then called on him to give him such a party as might secure the whole of those assembled in Simon's house, as he conceived that in all probability fear or the power of gold might from some of them extract the object of their meeting.

The old squire proposed that they should first fortify (as he called it) the inward man; but at last, after some demur as to the old mare and the troop travelling in the dark, the squire himself and his doughty crew sallied forth from the town.

Having ridden for about five miles in silence, until they arrived at the point where before Leonard and Mary had met, it was agreed that the men should dismount in the copse wood, whilst Gamme went on to seek for Leonard, or to reconnoitre the premises. The great object which Gamme had in view was, that the surprise should be so complete that they should not be able to take to their arms: as, notwithstanding this force being the pride of Briersley, in them David had but little confidence.

As he stealthily approached the house, the door was opened, and two people muffled in cloaks issued forth; as they neared the place where he stood, he hid behind a small projecting wall, and heard the following conversation:

“The night is dark, Scrope, for our ride.”

“The better, Grey; our deeds, I fear me, dare not yet trust the light; but hold, before we join our friends, as they term themselves, tell me what think you of Cambridge: is he to be trusted?”

“Why, to say the truth,” rejoined the former, “I wish he were not joined in this enterprise; as although I do not think him yet false, still there is something in his vacillation and his pretended conscience that tells me he is but half a traitor, as they will term us if we are unsuccessful; if the reverse, forsooth, we are patriots, loyal subjects of the rightful king. Where are Umfraville and Widderington?”

“Both gone to stir the Scots,” rejoined Scrope.

“ And Davy Howell ?” said Grey.

“ Ere this he has seen Glendower, and has prepared him for the blow we meditate,” replied Scrope. “ Thus if young Monmouth falls, the north is ours ; as although he has restored young Henry Percy, can Hotspur’s son forget the wrongs his father suffered from this race ? that Northumberland died an out-cast from his native land ? Howell also has promised with five thousand Welch to march into the midland counties when he hears of Monmouth’s death ; the army will proclaim young March, as, after Monmouth, he is lord of their affections. Thus all will prosper, if Cambridge is but firm. The rest approach.”

At this moment eight or ten men muffled as the two former, came up, and the whole proceeded to where their horses were tethered. David immediately returned to where his steed was tied, and rejoined his party. They instantly mounted, and the good squire knowing the reputation of Gamme, gave over to him the command. He divided his force into two

bodies; twelve men were with himself to remain in an open space on one side of the road, but in such a manner, that they could not be seen from the thickness of the cover, until the advance party had reached the spot. On the other side six men were placed together with the squire, but hid in the wood, and rather nearer the enemy; whilst Robert and another man were sent forward towards the foe, and on their appearance were to pretend flight. They waited about half-an hour in anxious suspense, when the tramp of horses was distinctly heard, and as this was the first display of the chivalry of Briersley, perhaps there was not one who did not feel rather more queerly than he could have wished to confess to his neighbour. Stories afterwards were afloat, that the tailor of Briersley, gallant John Stickley, at the first sound of the horn, displayed an extraordinary instance of untutored military genius, in proposing to David Gamme to allow him to form what he termed a reserve; be that as it may, the next day he was seen hale and strong at

Ringwood, and recounted to all his wonderful escape from beneath a heap of slain; although he must have fallen very early in the fight, as no one ever saw him after the word was given to charge.

Horses now rapidly approached, and Robert dashed by with his comrade, about twelve or fourteen horsemen in chase; when just as they came opposite the opening, Gamme to the cry of "St George!" threw himself on the flank of the pursuers; a few of his party followed him; some could not get their horses, unaccustomed to such amusement, into the *melée*; whilst others to do so were perhaps not over anxious. The consequence was, that although Gamme and his men in this charge overthrew two of their opponents, it was self-evident that his small party were but a bad match for those offered to them. Whilst however fighting at this disadvantage, the old squire came bravely down, with spear in rest, and probably would have done great damage, had not his own forebodings been verified, and Joan putting

her foot in a hole, pitched on her head, and deposited him most skilfully into the centre of the *melée*. The rest of his men took to flight, and left the enemy masters of the field of battle, with two of the Briersley men killed, and David prisoner.

The old knight unable to rise from the weight of his armour, alternately treated his favourite mare with all the hard words he knew, and then apostrophized himself for being seduced by David, after his having prophesied what would happen. At length he was got on his legs, and not being wounded, was quietly strapped on the back of his own mare, and Gamme being treated in a similar manner, the party proceeded at a round gallop towards Salisbury. Two guards were put over the prisoners, who neither would speak themselves, nor allow Sir Roger to speak; not that his language was calculated to do much harm; he simply wished to express his utter disgust at his own folly, and calling the saints to witness, and particularly his

own patron St. Bridget, that if he escaped this time, he would revisit Briersley and Deborah, and leave Monmouth to do that which Deborah had before voted impossible, "gain France without him."

The enemy had also lost one of their number, whom, however, they had brought away with them. The whole proceeded in gloomy silence, until turning off the road, they reached a lonely house, where the prisoners were loosened from their bonds, and made to alight. They were then pushed into a small outhouse, which was barred without, over which a sentry was placed. The day had begun to break, and David had just time to see that the sentry was evidently a servant of one of the party, or, at any rate, not a soldier; he immediately therefore conceived hopes of escape. Whilst ruminating on this subject, he was interrupted by the exclamations of Sir Roger.—

"Ah! Deborah, Deborah! why did I leave you, and my dear iron mines! fool that I was, because Monmouth had a great name, to quit

my fire-side! and now my brave Briersley men, where are they? either dead, or what friend David would call worse, dishonoured, by leaving their old master to fight his own battle! Where now is Sukey, where Brown Bess, where my team brought all the way from the Welch Border? Oh! if I can but escape this once, may the death of the Holy Martyr St. Sebastian be mine, if—

“Hush, hush!” said Gamme, interrupting him, “a death such as St. Sebastian’s is much too good for one who is thus cast down by so trifling a cause. Why, fifty times I have been in worse streights, and here I am, just as sure in my own mind that I shall cross the seas with King Henry, as I am that you will never do the same. But now recollect, if we talk we have no names, as I am not over anxious that our present jailors should know me, unless absolutely necessary.”

Shortly afterwards their guard entered with some straw, and two chains, whilst a countryman brought in some bread, cheese and beer,

yet not one word was uttered. When the man entered, the knight tried to address him, but was stopped by the sentry, and was told that their food depended on perfect silence.

Three days thus passed, and at last it was determined that the next day some attempt was to be made to bribe the countryman. Accordingly, when provisions were brought to them the following morning, a piece of gold was placed in the basket, and they trusted that if it had any effect, something in his deportment would inform them of the fact. Nothing, however, appeared in the countryman's manner to denote that he understood their meaning. Gamme now began to get seriously uneasy, as he felt that the conspirators might do their work, whilst they kept him prisoner. Again, what had become of Hastings? As for the squire, he still continued abusing fortune, and regretting the loss of Sukey, but further than that, provided he got his regular meals, he seemed to care little how the rest of the world progressed.

The following night our prisoners were awakened out of their sleep by hearing the following conversation :—

“So, Gregory, instead of tending Simon’s sheep, you have turned soldier? a pretty guard you are truly! two ploughmen and a shepherd! and pray what handsome reward does your master give you for this notable employment?”

“Why d’ye see, mistress, Master Simon promises well and handsomely; says he, “Gregory, keep these two fellows for six days, and a golden noble shall touch your palm.”

“But, Gregory,” replied the female, “suppose you hang for this job, of what profit will then be your gold?”

“Plague on’t, talk not of hanging!” ejaculated the man.

“But I do, Gregory; and I tell you more, I know where three nobles are to be got, and a good master into the bargain.”

“Odsbodikins! that’s something like,” replied he, “and where there be no hanging?”

"Do, Gregory," answered the girl, "as I command you, and you and Vincent and Lucas shall find a good master, and the three nobles each. Let me first speak but a few words to your prisoners."

The man hesitated for a moment, and then rejoined, "but, mistress, should Simon come, who will keep me from his anger?"

"He can't, Gregory, he is now keeping watch for those who have here met."

"Well," said he, "and how long will ye remain?"

"But five short minutes," replied she.

"Done, 'tis a bargain!—but one condition more," rejoined the man.

"What is't?" said the girl.

"One smack from those pretty lips of yours."

"None of your impertinence, Gregory, I will see what your master says to it."

"Fair and softly, my good mistress! tell him too that you are going to let out his birds, as he calls them."

"Then, Gregory," said she, "you do not

wish for the three nobles, and the good place, and you desire to be hanged."

"The blessed Virgin protect us! Don't say that again; there, there's the key of the outer door, and the other is only barred; but be quick, for if master Simon were to come, I should die of the fright."

She quickly undid the lock, and to the delight of the prisoners, a gentle voice was heard through the gloom, and the enquiry was made, whether Master David Gamme was here prisoner.?

"I am," replied David, "and you can be no other than Mary, old Simon's ward."

"David Gamme," said she, "I have now no time for explanation; suffice it to say, that you will be released with your fellow prisoner, on condition that you promise to redeem a pledge I have made, first, to bestow a few nobles on those concerned in your liberation; and, secondly, to find them some means of gaining an honest livelihood."

"I promise," answered Gamme, "all and

every thing that you, Mary, may pledge me too. Leonard raves about your ingenuous face, and so I take his word as my guarantee. Can you tell me aught of him?"

"Yes," replied Mary, "he is safe, but of that when you are free. Recollect, be ready at this time to-morrow night. I will have horses, and all prepared for flight to Southampton; and I must, I believe, so far claim the protection of the gallant David Gamme, as I dare not await my guardian's fury, when he finds his prisoners have fled,—I only desire protection to the convent of St. Augustine, where the good mother Ursula will provide me shelter."

"I would vow myself your knight, Mary," replied Gamme, "but I should have to break a lance with a young friend of mine; so I will e'en lodge you where you wish, provided always, that you promise not to take the veil, as should you do so, I should have to account to this same individual, as an accessory to the plot."

“Sir esquire, I will willingly make that pledge, if you, on the other hand will pledge yourself for the safety of my guardian Simon, should aught in these transactions appear against him. Your young friend has already given me this pledge, but I would also desire your assurance.”

“Mary, I give you my guarantee for his safety.”

The old knight had not spoken one word during this parley, but the moment Mary had disappeared, the squire exclaimed.—“She sha’nt go to the convent, by the holy St. Bridget; Deborah wants a companion a little younger than her old mother; she has always wished for a young chick of this sort; and as, forsooth, I have been too fond of freedom to fetter myself with a wife, and as nobody wishes to be fettered with old Deborah, we are left without shoots of our own, and must not throw away this chance that Providence has put in our way. She shall come and live with us;—but, David, who is she?”

"I know nothing," replied Gamme, "except that she is under the guardianship of this innkeeper. Hastings, the youth of whom I spoke to you as we approached the field of battle, where old Joan so distinguished herself.—"

"Come, come, David Gamme," replied the knight testily, "let us talk no more of that field, although it has curtailed our king's levies of twenty spears."

"Well, we will say no more about it. This Hastings, declares she is nobly born, and he says, that notwithstanding milking cows, and other farming work, her hand is as soft as a lady's, her voice and manner also do not betoken rusticity."

"Ods faith! I care not," replied the old knight, "whether her blood be gentle or rustic, let her get me out of this dark hole, not fit for a mole to live in, she shall come with me to old Deb., and be our daughter, and we will try if we cannot be quits with her; for I can tell you, master Gamme, I

have had quite enough of soldiering, and if Monmouth can't take Paris without me, why, faith! he must stay quietly in England; and perhaps after all it would be quite as wise, although the right is his; for so Doctor Gallipot clearly proved to all Briersley, when we had our last meeting at the skittle ground. 'For,' said he 'nothing can be clearer than our Harry's right. First, Richard the Second was heir to Edward the Third, who was rightful King of France; therefore the King of England is King of France, therefore King Harry is King of France.'—Now this I think," continued the squire, "is clear enough for any one, and in the skittle ground, I will ever maintain Harry's right to the crown:—but no more war for me. Poor Sukey and Brown Bess! I dare not look Deborah in the face, and how they will laugh in the village when I go back; but as for Deborah, the young filly will soon make her forget Joan, and perhaps the Squire of Briersley may by-and-by forget his Ringwood campaign. Oh! Roger, Roger, thou hast been an old fool, but you will gain

a daughter, Deborah; poor Sukey and Brown Bess! God bless you, Mary!"

Thus did our squire meditate, or rather soliloquize, until sleep brought a termination to his mental woes.

CHAPTER V.

What is that form, if not a shape of air?

Methinks, my jailor's face shows wondrous fair!

THE CORSAIR.

EARNESTLY did our knight and Gamme look out the following day for the shades of night; and every sound they heard for hours brought fresh disappointment. At length, when hope was well nigh extinct, the bar was cautiously withdrawn, and Mary made her appearance; she enjoined perfect silence, and in an under tone desired them to follow. Accompanied by David and Sir Roger she issued from the shed, and passing close to the house turned into a small path, which having followed for a short distance, she dashed suddenly into

the wood. Here horses were found, and to the surprise of David, Leonard, with two countrymen with them. A hearty shake of the hand was the only greeting, as Mary gave an order for immediate mounting, and in a short time they were en route for Southampton. After riding briskly for some two leagues, during which time Hastings was at the side of Mary, unless where the path rendered two horses abreast impossible, they pulled up; and an explanation on all sides ensued. Leonard was required to show how he had so strangely disappeared, until called again as suddenly upon the scene by their general benefactress.

“On the evening,” said Leonard “when you, David, left me to proceed for troops to Ringwood, I took up my position near Simon’s house, to note the number that went in, (having reconnoitred well the grounds,) so that we might on your arrival plan a complete surprise. Shortly afterwards, three waggons arrived, and halted just opposite the barn; my

curiosity was excited, and being dressed as a countryman, I was certain that e'en if observed, my disguise would screen me from trouble. I tried however to conceal myself as much as possible, but approached close enough to observe that which was taken from the waggons. I found also that those who did the work of carters were clumsy and evidently unaccustomed to the task; by the light of the lantern they held, I recognised in one of the carters the same page whom I before saw in Simon's house, and whom I can recollect to have seen in the train of the Earl of Cambridge. The waggons were filled with arms and other articles, which I could not make out. The carts being unloaded, they retraced their steps, and the largest portion of the enactors of this scene returned to the house. I now wished to discover, if possible, the exact situation in which they were, whether armed or unarmed, and also to have (if possible) a few words with Mary. I accordingly crept towards the house, but I had not advanced

many paces, when I felt myself grasped by the collar, thrown down and tied. Old Simon hearing the scuffle, came out, recognised me, and I was thrust into one of the outhouses: shortly afterwards I heard the whole body gallop from the house; the sound of the clashing of arms ensued from the direction that they had taken, and I then felt persuaded that you must have succeeded in procuring troops. After the noise had ceased, I remained in momentary expectation of your approach; and at last I heard horsemen return at full speed. In a few minutes the door of my prison was thrust open, I was tied on a horse, and with my eyes blindfolded, and horsemen escorting me on either side, we proceeded at as rapid a pace as the night permitted. After about two hours' ride, I was dismounted, and again placed in confinement. For two days I remained, nor would any one exchange a syllable with me; provisions were brought by an armed man; I vainly essayed

by bribes to induce my sentry to speak, and by still greater promises, but all to no effect. On the third evening, I heard a voice, which I recognised as Simon's, give orders to the sentry that the prisoner should forthwith be brought before the council. Now, although I had little reason to regard Simon in any other light than as our chief persecutor, still I felt more at ease, as an inward conviction told me that Mary was not far off, and that what she had so well begun, she could not leave half-done.

“ Being again blindfolded, I was taken from my den, and conducted between two mutes to the house adjoining my prison, and when the bandage was taken from my eyes, I found myself in a room totally unfurnished, with the exception of a table, round which were seated ten or twelve men, dressed in cloaks, with masks over the face of each. The president was a low thick-set man, and from his enunciation was, I am convinced, more

accustomed to the pen than to the field. I was motioned to a seat, and the following interrogations then took place.—

“‘Prisoner,’ said the president, ‘you will be pleased to state your name, and place of abode.’

“‘As I am here through violence,’ answered I, ‘and not from having offended against the laws of England, I refuse to answer any interrogatories.’

“‘Young man,’ said the president, ‘you will do well to curb this unruly spirit, as much may depend on the manner in which you may answer such questions as this court may please to put to you; we have means also of forcing you to speak, should you drive us to that extremity.’—

“At this moment a tall man of noble bearing, whispered a few words to the president, who resumed:—‘The question as to who you are, and the place of your abode was merely a form, for we are fully aware that you are page to the most noble Earl of March, on

whose part we now interrogate you. You are discovered lurking round the house of Simon the tavern-keeper, the reason of your so doing is required."

"I again repeat that I refuse to answer any interrogatories; and as to your questioning me on the part of the Earl of March, I believe it not, as he herds not with those whose deeds will not stand the light of day."

"The president resumed. 'Do you know that signet?' (at the same time producing a seal, which Hastings, to his great surprise, recognised as that of the Earl of March). 'By that we order you to obey.'

"How came you by that signet?" I replied.

"Young man, we came not here to be questioned,' resumed the president, 'but to have you account for conduct which, at least, appears suspicious.'

"A stern voice from one of the masquers said, 'ay, and beware how you equivocate, or waste longer our time; we have easy means of taming bantlings such as you. Your

master will not thank you for this waste of time.'

" 'I once more deny,' I rejoined, 'your right to question me. I believe that signet has been surreptitiously procured, and no power or violence shall make me swerve from my resolve.'

" 'Enough, young man,' replied the president, 'our suspicions are confirmed; you were acting the spy for your friend David Gamme. You will rue this day. Colin, take him into your custody. We will consult as to his fate. In the meantime you may tame his spirit with some soothing discipline. We will try the effect of bread and water.'

" 'As words would only have increased the wrath of my persecutors, I was silent; and as I passed out blindfolded as before, I heard a gentle voice say, 'What, Colin, turned jailor in your old age?'

" 'Why, yes, mistress Mary; you see this young blade wasn't content with once eluding the vigilance of our master, but he comes and

puts his nose again into the trap ; and all for what ? can you guess ? for if you can, go and tell those midnighters up-stairs, as they want him to say for why he came ; and he said something about power and violence ; and I am ordered to feed him like Adam or Nebuchadnezzar, on herbs and water ; but, God bless your little heart, why look so downcasty like ? you don't know him ; he aint nothing to you, for if he was, no hair of his head should be touched while old Colin and Robert and Sim were his keepers. Do you think I can forget, when my old dame was so woundy sick, the little girl that came down each day through the snow to see and comfort her ? No, miss Mary, I ha'n't forgot that, nor sha'n't neither in a hurry.'

" At this moment Simon's voice was heard, and the men hastening on their prisoner, speedily shut him up in his former lodging.

" Instead of being cast down at the idea of the confinement, and the sorry diet promised by this self-elected tribunal, I was sure from what

occurred as I returned to my prison that my captivity was nearly at an end, and I rested that night in perfect confidence of speedy release; nor was I disappointed. The following morning old Colin came with a sorry allowance of bread and water, and said, loud enough to be heard without, 'There, my young sauce-box, there's your breakfast, dinner and supper, and may your stomach not be overloaded by such delicacies.' At the same time he looked hard at me, and holding up a slip of paper, placed it on the table, and hastily left the room. I instantly seized the note, and read in our pretty Mary's handwriting, 'Be ready at midnight. Your friends are also prisoners here, but will join you.' At midnight, as promised, my jailer opened the door to me, and I followed him to this place, where Mary had arranged that horses should be in waiting for us."

Mary soon began to show great symptoms of fatigue, and they were obliged to halt at a village some few miles short of Southampton: on

taking her from her horse, the poor girl could hardly stand, and Leonard carried her into the hostelrie at which they stopped. The old squire, however, interfered a little more than quite pleased our page, and, in fact, although he had never spoken yet to Mary on the subject, began to assume over her parental authority.

"I must have you go to bed, Mary, instantly," he said; "Deborah would so order, I know; and she won't forgive me unless I see that her wishes are obeyed. So, harkye, you bowing and scraping booby," addressing the landlord, who was making an unnecessary number of demi-prostrations, "go tell your old dame to get the best bed instantly ready, and warm it, d'ye see; and get a cup of hot posset with a toast in it, and—but, dear, Mary, how pale you are looking!" Whilst the kind old knight was thus speaking, she fell back on the couch overcome by the night's fatigue. Leonard held her head in his hands, whilst restoratives were applied, and the old

dame of the house, who soon came bustling in, recommended her being immediately carried to bed, which being done, all, except the hostess, were desired by the old knight to decamp.

On leaving, however, the room, Leonard, as a matter of course, contrived to be the last; but the old squire exclaimed, "Come, tramp, young gentleman, tramp;" then turning towards her, "How feel you, my child? would that Deborah were here! Now, old lady," addressing the landlady, "you must sit here whilst she sleeps, and mind, if she becomes worse, at any hour, call me. At present, rest is better than any son of Esculapius; and look-ye, woman, take care that she has the best of everything that your good hostelrie may contain; spare not the old knight's siller. God bless you, Mary! I have not been so happy for many a day."

"I will thank you, my kind friend," replied Mary, "when I am able, for your kindness. At present receive the warmest gratitude of the orphan."

“ No orphan, Mary, no orphan, as long as old Roger Trevor and Deborah live ; but now sleep, my child.” Saying this, the warm-hearted old knight left the apartment. On descending, he found Leonard cooking some mess in the kitchen, which was afterwards discovered to be Mary’s posset. David Gamme having taken a hasty meal, had already ridden on to Southampton.

CHAPTER VI.

I arrest thee of high treason, by the name of Richard, Earl
of Cambridge.

SHAKSPEARE.

THE sun had about three hours risen, when David Gamme arrived at the abode of the monarch of England, three months before the hall of justice of this petty burgh; but Southampton had risen suddenly from being a small fishing hamlet to rank for the time as a place of the very last importance. In the outskirts of the town were to be seen cavalry and infantry practising every manœuvre and device of war. The former were mounted on horses of the Norman breed, powerful, and consequently well adapted to carry the enor-

mous weight of armour which then fatigued both horse and rider ; for although the use of fire-arms was known, and cannon had been used as much as seventy years before by their fathers at the battle of Cressy, still so rude was the arm, and so imperfect the composition by which the bullet was propelled, that by it but little progress in the trade of war had as yet been made. The cavalry also, although well mounted, were in general the retainers of some chief, who simply knew how in a general *melée* to use with effect the battle-axe or the sword.

In these warlike exercises the most expert, as well as the best disciplined, were the royal body of archers : these from their infancy had been accustomed to the use of the bow, and the very child then sped his arrow at such a mark and at such a distance as would put to the blush even the very best of our archers of the present day.

Within the town were to be seen knights riding to and fro, each followed by bands of

retainers; and although of course animosities and feuds existed between the nobles, and their thus frequent collision promised much disquiet to this before peaceful burgh, still Henry had already introduced that discipline which stood him in such good stead eventually, and his energy and firmness, mingled with kindness and clemency, so won the hearts and feelings of the majority, and in such sort awed the remainder, that as much absence from lawless acts or violence was to be found in Southampton as in the best regulated city of the present day.

Just as David arrived at the place before indicated, a slight tumult was heard in the neighbouring streets, and suddenly a noble-looking youth of about the age of twenty-five, dressed in the green-tight habit of the English archer, whilst on his head was the plumed cap worn by the chief of that arm, galloped up the street. The collar of ermine encircled his throat, and he was followed by about a dozen horsemen all gallantly mounted. But there

was an air of nobleness which set the archer far, very far (in the imagination of any one who saw the group) above those who were accompanying him.

It required not the evidently heartfelt "God bless our king!" which was uttered by every mouth as he rode along; it required no previous knowledge of the individual, to see and know that this was Harry of Monmouth, King of England.

David's heart beat strongly with pride when Henry appeared. When first the young prince had drawn his sword, David had been appointed his armour-bearer; it was he who had taught the then young prince the use of every arm; had been by his side in every fight; had even instilled into his mind all that was honourable or chivalrous; and whilst others secured honours and titles, David gained the love and esteem of his monarch. Perhaps no devotion was ever greater than that which he felt for Harry Monmouth.

The young king vaulted from his saddle,

and when Gamme was about to offer him the customary homage, he seized his hand and said,—

“The king requires not the outward homage of David Gamme, but Henry of Monmouth begs the hand of his old master, and the counsel of his best friend. How fares it with you, David Gamme?” continued the monarch: have you taken a farewell look at those bleak hills whose half-naked warriors have so often caused your king to sleep with his sword girt to his hip? I say, a farewell look, as forsooth our cousin of France laughs our proposals to scorn, and defies us to our teeth; and if we are to believe their vaunt, our poor England is but a sorry match for our second kingdom. But say, David, what news from Wales? for reports are rife of risings in the south.”

“My liege, I crave a private audience for such news as I may bring.”

“Be it as you will, David.” Then turning to those who had accompanied him into the court: “Pembroke, I would again see the

archers fire at the butt; and take good heed that those from Lancashire are present. Who commands them?

"John de Egerton," replied the earl.

"Let him await our pleasure here some short space before the appointed hour. They rival not yet our bows from Nottingham." Then turning to another: "Sir Geoffrey, see quickly to the horse from Yorkshire. We would review them ourselves ere the week has closed. Has Brougham arrived with the Durham levy? If he be, let him with Morritt, Stanley, and the Earl of Westmoreland, one hour hence await us in the audience chamber. To you, Earl of Cambridge, I hereby give commission to investigate and settle our affairs on the Welch border; and we pray you haste your errand, we would shortly again see you at Southampton, as we desire the arm and counsel of our noble cousin in this our most just enterprise."

"Your wish is law, my liege," replied Cambridge. "Your servant during his absence

prays for your royal favour, and trusts ere long to bring the traitors before your majesty."

"We know your zeal, good Cambridge," replied Henry.

The earl had bowed, and was moving towards the gate of the court in which these orders had been given, when Gamme suddenly dropping on his knee, said, "My liege, I crave a boon"——

"'Tis granted, David," replied the king, "as soon as asked, as well we wot that when our faithful servant David Gamme demands a boon, 'tis only to weigh down still more with sense of gratitude Henry of Monmouth from some new act of devotion to his service."

Gamme continued—"I pray, then, my liege, command for this day only of your majesty's guard"

"'Tis a strange request," rejoined Henry; "but our royal word is pledged. From this moment the command is yours."

During this short colloquy Cambridge had remained to hear the boon required, and in

common with the remainder of those present was struck with the singularity of the request. All, however, waited with anxiety to see what would follow, as they knew Gamme too well to imagine the request had been made from any weak or foolish cause. No sooner was the royal permission granted than, turning round to Sir Theophilus Lucas, who commanded the guards, he said, "In virtue of the commission just granted to me by his most gracious majesty, I hold you, Sir Theophilus, responsible that no one leaves these walls without my permission;" then turning to Cambridge, "Richard of Coningsburgh, by favour of your most gracious sovereign, Earl of Cambridge, I charge thee with high treason, and foul conspiracy against the state; and I crave his majesty to order your immediate arrest."

Cambridge, astonished at the suddenness of the charge, and at a moment moreover when fresh confidence had been placed in him by the king, for a second hesitated; at length he replied,

“ I know not, master David Gamme, from what source you have gathered cause of accusation against one of his majesty’s most faithful subjects, and I am still more sure that some most artful deception has been practised. Every one knows that the name of David Gamme and honour are too indissolubly connected to allow the thought for a moment that he wilfully deceives; but I appeal to your majesty whether I have deserved to be thus dishonoured in the presence of the nobles of your majesty’s court? and I thus throw down my gauntlet of defiance, and let my accuser prove his slanderous accusations.”

Henry, who never yet had doubted the zeal or the judgment of David Gamme, still was most unwilling to act with this precipitancy even on his advice, or rather request; he interrupted therefore Cambridge by saying,—

“ David Gamme, we know that nothing but zeal for our service influences your actions; but is it not possible that you may have been deceived? Many there are who might be of-

fended with our deeds, but 'tis difficult to couple the name of Richard of Coningsburgh with treason against Henry of Monmouth."

"My liege," resumed Cambridge, "you do me but justice. Is't likely that I shall forget that through my sovereign's favour I am what I am? Can I forget that my brother-in-law of March from surveillance or prison was raised by the generosity of my sovereign to enjoy his unlimited confidence? I pray you, my liege, to believe that master David Gamme has been grossly deceived; his noble nature has been abused to forward the views of those who would remove from your royal person your majesty's most faithful, most devoted servant."

"Would to God," rejoined Gamme, "doubt could exist in my mind of your base ingratitude, Earl of Cambridge, to the best of masters. My liege, I pray you to call your council, let one in whom you may trust, summon each member, and, save this one person, let no one stir from this, your majesty's abode, until all orders are issued, which may emanate

from your council this day. Let the Earl of Cambridge only be detained until the council has met, and then, my liege, you will better be able to judge as to your further resolves."

The king holding up his hand, as if to enjoin silence, resumed. "My Lord of Cambridge, we arrest thee not; but in deference to our most trusty counsellor, we place thee in charge of your cousin of Suffolk, and of thine, Sir Lucius Paulett; you will be prepared to attend the council, should any summons reach you to that effect. Sir Theophilus Lucas, see that the orders of Master David Gamme are strictly obeyed; Sir Walter Hungerford, you in person will summon each member of the council." Then bowing to those who had escorted him, to intimate that he needed not their attendance further, followed by David Gamme, he entered his apartments.

In a conversation with the king, which followed this scene in the court yard, Gamme briefly related to him what had occurred: in consequence of which, as the ramifications of

the plot might be more extensive than at first were contemplated, and as even traitors might be in the very council, a trusty officer was instantly despatched by the king himself, to the officer commanding the troops at Salisbury, to seize on the lords Scrope and Grey ; also to the high-sheriff of Gloucester, to get into his power, if possible, Howell and others, who were supposed to be the fomenters of the disturbances of the borders. A letter was then despatched to Hastings, with a commission to take with him a troop of horse from the most convenient post, and to bring old Simon before the council, also all other people found either in his house, or at the place from which, by the aid of Mary, they had lately escaped. Also to examine the barn, and to return with all despatch. The old squire and Mary were summoned instantly to Southampton.

CHAPTER VII.

Fought for the land his soul adored,
For happy homes and altars free,
His only talisman, the sword,
His only spell-word, liberty !

LALIA ROOKH.

CONSTANCE having retired, Glendower motioned March to a seat; "Edmund" said he, "I have just heard strange news, such as will force Glendower once more to take the field, and even this very night my task again commences. Earl of March," he continued, in a more emphatic tone, "I would have you answer me from your heart, in all honesty and truth. Was Henry of Monmouth no longer an inhabitant of this

world, should you then contest the throne of England?"

March paused for a moment, and then answered, "'Tis a question, that to you, Glendower, alone would I answer, as did I say, that in such cases I might be tempted so to act; the intemperate zeal of pretended friends, but real enemies, might stir up rebellion in the land; and malice might therewith couple the name of Edmund Mortimer; and should death fall on Henry before nature's law could have consigned him to the grave, on him suspicion might fall. But I speak frankly to you, as honour has ever been your guide; in such case, I say, I would contend the throne against all competitors; but whilst Henry (and may the Holy Virgin protect and guide him), holds sway in England, so long shall he find the Earl of March his truest friend, his most loyal subject."

"Hear then, Earl of March," replied Owen; "Two days hence a blow will be struck in England, that will place the Earl of March

on the throne. A party headed by the Earl of Cambridge, and formed from the very centre of Henry's court, will seize on his person, and ere this, the Welch have been prepared secretly, by Davy Howell; they will form a junction with the Northern counties, and will march on London. You will be proclaimed as their lawful sovereign, and Henry sent prisoner to France."

"Is't possible," answered March, "that in the very heart of the noble Henry's court, such base ingratitude can exist; and Cambridge too, his own creation? but I must away, as whilst Harry lives, my arm still shall be raised in his behalf. Honour and virtue have indeed fled from courts, when Harry of Monmouth meets such reward! Base, base ingratitude!"

"Earl of March," rejoined Glendower, "in confidence this was spoken, and should even failure be the result, I hold you bound not to proclaim those as traitors, with whose names you are acquainted."

“Glendower, I sought not this confidence, and however I may act, I shall deem it my duty to warn Henry against this foul conspiracy; for thus instructed, and having given no pledge, should I not truly have forfeited all claim to loyalty were I silent?”

“Most justly spoken, Earl of March, and as Glendower was indiscreet, so he must now be prudent for the sake of his friends, therefore, I fear you must remain my prisoner.”

March smiled when he heard Glendower talk of that which appeared impossible, namely, the detaining him against his will.

“Be not offended,” said Glendower, “that I am thus obliged to act, but the safety of friends is not to be idly risked. I should ill-deserve their trust, could I allow private friendship to interfere with that which I deem my public duty; but I would not wish to be driven to the extremity I have mentioned; you may, however, take your choice, whether you would prefer remaining here, until I deem the persons of whom I speak

are safe, or continue your way, giving me your simple pledge that this conversation is secret to all."

"Glendower, it is impossible, when my king, my friend, is in danger, to give such pledge. But why do I delay? each minute may be precious. I will go and throw myself at Henry's feet, trusting to his clemency to spare these misguided men."

"Hold, Earl of March; I should honour the feelings which dictate your reply, but the same feelings must of course equally dictate to me the obligation of keeping you here, until either my friends have succeeded in their bold attempt, or until concealment of their names and intentions become no longer necessary. Although I appear to be here nearly alone, trust not to that hope of escape, my guards are at hand, and no one without my order can leave the spot where now we stand. A chosen and a faithful band still watch over the safety of their prince. Once more, therefore, take your choice.

"My choice," replied March, "is easily made, when honour or dishonour be the issue; but, Glendower, I came freely thy guest, and I claim as free egress."

"Edmund, 'tis impossible; without a pledge of silence, here you must remain; your wants shall be looked to, and one week I trust, will once more permit my giving you freedom. For the present, farewell, *Edmund, Earl of March*, may it shortly be, *Edmund, King of England!* And now to rest.—What, ho! Clanmorris!—From the entrance of a small cave in the rock, a man now appeared, accoutred after the manner of the Welch mountaineer when prepared for battle.

"Clanmorris, you will see to the safe custody of this youth, and that he wants for nothing that this our rude castle of refuge can afford; but your life depends on his sure keeping. Four of my faithful Welch guards will remain with you. Let the rest three hours before the dawn of day be prepared at the Craigilscroft; there I will join them. Send to

our friends at Harlech to prepare our horse. Let blind Griffiths be summoned ; and now to your post."

On Griffiths making his appearance, Glendower continued—" You, Griffiths, will here await your master's return ; your age requires rest."

The man to whom this was addressed proudly said, " Has Owen Glendower resigned his right, or since when was it that a Prince of Wales moved without his harper ? or what has old Griffiths done, thus to be thrown aside when his master takes the field ? Has the harper forgot the note that cheered on our gallant countrymen at Melienydd, long to be remembered by the men of Herefordshire ? Because his eyes are dim, is he to be cast aside as worthless—a thing to be forgotten or despised ? Prince of Wales, I claim my right, to live or die with my old master." Saying this, the old man held himself erect, and attempted (as it were) with his lustreless orbs to gaze proudly on his prince.

“ ’Twas but for your own good, my faithful Ap Griffiths,” replied Glendower; “ but I own your right; and as you played at Melienydd, so shall you once more play in the land of haughty England.”

“ Edmund, there is your couch;” and pointing to a projection from the rocky wall, which had been covered with straw and leaves, he continued, “ a warrior’s couch! such and none more luxurious for two years has been the resting-place of Owen Glendower.” Saying this, he retired to another recess in the cave, whilst Clanmorris, with his drawn broadsword in his hand, lay himself down before the mouth.

The earl had determined at all risks to escape; but as Owen was soon to depart, and take with him the greater part of the guard, he resolved to defer the attempt. March, although accustomed to endure hardship from his youth, still found the princely couch of Glendower was not of such a nature as to force on premature sleep. He began, therefore, by reflecting over the late conversation with

Glendower, and then of his being a prisoner a time so stirring in England; of the conspiracy, evidently on the eve of explosion; and of the change of circumstances which this might create in his own prospects. To his honour, however, be it said, that no selfish feelings were in his thoughts; he dreaded as for the welfare of England, the safety of her king. His mind then reverted to the danger which Owen was again about to run, and into which he was about to lead Constance de Hugueville. Shortly, however, his ideas became more confused; fatigue deprived the rock of its discomfort, and March followed the example of his neighbours, whose nasal music had for some time testified to him their enjoyment of the cavern luxuries.

His rest was disturbed; Constance was in his dreams: and once he fancied she bent over him and wished him farewell. When he opened his eyes, the light of day was shining into the cave, he looked around, and saw Clanmorris standing at its mouth.

“ My lord,” said Clanmorris, “ a bed of roses or the eider down could not have improved your slumbers. By our Gracious Lady, I should have judged that when fair mistress Constance wished a young knight farewell, his answer should have been something better than a snort ”

“ What mean you,” replied March starting up ; “ is she gone then ? ”

“ Ay, truly ! ” replied the man, “ and our brave old master, and far on the road now to Dolgellan to join Davy Howell and his five hundred merry men of Merioneth.”

Although nothing could equal the disappointment that March felt, he nevertheless said no more on that subject ; but having asked Clanmorris whether he was to consider himself a close prisoner, the latter answered that he would show him the mysteries of the cavern. They now issued forth on the platform, and Clanmorris pointed out to him four or five other caves, which at night he had not seen, and which could only be approached by

narrow ledges ; these caves looked towards the spot where the descent was made, and it was evident that should any one be desirous of descending, that it would be necessary in the first place to get possession of these isolated spots, which appeared an undertaking absolutely impossible. If, therefore, well provisioned, and since a spring gushed forth from the rock close by the entrance of one of these caverns, it would be a small fortress of no inconsiderable strength, which might be defended by a few men against any force that might be brought against it. At present, however, the haunt of Glendower was known but to few ; and so devoted to him were the Welch of this district, that nothing could have tempted them to betray their former leader. Edmund at once saw the hopelessness of any attempt at quitting the cave, and resigning himself to the necessity, wiled away his time in hearing Clanmorris relate the extraordinary escapes of Owen Glendower, and the devotion of Constance to her grandfather.

“ The battle of Grosmont was the first fatal check that the Welch Prince had met, and although from that period, 1405, until the year 1410, a desultory warfare had continued ; still from the former year it gradually died away, and from the last date until the present period Owen’s life had been one continued scene of difficulty, danger, and privation. Constance was left at the death of her parents to the guardianship of her grandfather, and when he rashly risked his liberty and life to visit her at a convent into which she had been sent, when misfortunes came thick upon him about two years before the present time, she insisted on joining him ; nor could he well refuse, as the old mother abbess was a partisan of England, and treated Lady Constance with scorn, whilst every species of indignity was practised to drive her from the walls. Since that period she has never for a day quitted Glendower ; and the love he bears for her is only to be equalled by the love he bears his country.

“ At one time,” said Clanmorris, “ Glen-

dower, with about thirty followers, was so closely pursued, that nothing but letting loose their horses and crawling into some high heather, prevented their immediate capture; whilst a few only of the best mounted took a different direction, and diverted the pursuit. In this position, however, they were obliged to lie until darkness covered the earth, as Lord Talbot was close at hand. They then continued to move to a higher portion of the mountain, where again they concealed themselves. Sir William Nieuport, however, with the army of Herefordshire was on the other side of the mountain, and escape appeared impossible, when old Griffiths at night went into the different villages at its base, and spread the report that the men of Denbigh had joined Owen, and would attack Lord Talbot in the morning; on this, Sir John Nieuport joined Talbot, and once more Glendower was free.

“ In all these excursions the Lady Constance rode in the dress of a country girl, fed on the coarsest food, and when sometimes even the

very followers of Glendower were from fatigue almost prepared to give themselves up to the enemy, her spirit quailed not; and riding by their side, encouraged each, talking of their homes, their wives, their children: and perhaps at that moment Lady Constance held as great a share of the affections of the warriors of Wales as did their old and revered master, Owen Glendower.

“ ’Twill be a terrible day, my lord, when our old master parts with Lady Constance, as part he must. Her wonderful spirit has till now preserved her; but it requires the iron frame and constitution of a Glendower, not of a feeble woman, to withstand such hardships. In his anxiety for her, he runs daily risks. It will be a sad hour to us all; but they say Lady Constance has good friends in France, and she will most likely be sent there.”

Day after day passed, nor had Edmund other amusement than in thus conversing with Clanmorris on this theme, which he found strangely interesting to him; and before his

imprisonment was concluded, the name of Constance in many a form was cut out of the solid rock.

On the tenth morning, when March's patience was pretty nigh exhausted, a messenger arrived, bearing a letter from Glendower, which ran as follows:—"Right noble Earl, would that I could address you *de facto* as my liege lord, as you are *de jure*; would that Wales had been true to herself; but her children have been faithless. You are no longer my prisoner. You have seen Glendower for the last time. Where I go, it matters not to the friend of Henry of Monmouth; but, ere we part for ever, one word let me say:—forget not, Earl of March, that you are the rightful heir of England's throne; for your title and right Wales has spent her best blood. Had Glendower freed his country from the yoke of England, she would still have waged war for the right of the Earl of March. If you e'er regain your right, forget her not. When Glendower is no more, and when posterity will pass

judgment on his deeds, let him not be branded as the disturber of his country's peace for his own aggrandisement, but as one who fought for his country's freedom against the usurper of the English throne. To Henry of Lancaster Wales owed no allegiance. When he dethroned his sovereign, she was not bound to join England in her homage to an usurper. Let this letter, the last I e'er shall write to friend or foe, be as the testament of the dying man. Go, Earl of March, to your Henry of Monmouth, say to him, that for his clemency in victory to my poor Welch, Owen Glendower thanks him ; tell him, that his first and bitterest enemy has passed from the scene ; that as the destroyer of my country's liberty, I hated him ; but still, that were I not a Welchman, were I not Owen Glendower, I would be Henry of Monmouth. Edmund, farewell, for ever!" The letter was signed with his initials, O. G., and closed with that seal which had given such offence to Henry the Fourth, on which were his arms, and title of Prince of

Wales; and the impression of which seal is in existence to this very day.

A second letter accompanied it from Constance. "Well-beloved cousin," it commenced, "My grandfather's intentions I know not, as he has not yet declared them. I know thus far, however, that he returns not to Monmouthshire. Severe have been our troubles and dangers since we parted, and still greater await us! it is not for myself I fear, as even rude as war is, and lawless many of those whose trade it is, woman has little to fear. The bearer of this will give you all details of what has occurred; my grandfather I fear, meditates dismissing me to my other native land,—to me he has hinted as much, but nothing is yet decided. He talks of breaking his sword, and at other times he asks questions regarding monks and friaries; but old as he is, my grandfather would make a tilt-yard of a monastery court, and poor old Griffiths would make but a sorry chorister; I know not what to think, with all his rude

warrior habits; you know not, Edmund, half Glendower's virtues,—fierce to his enemies, but to his friends, noble and generous; and to me, no words can ever express what he is; nor can I, half my love, and veneration for him. Alas! Edmund, let not Glendower's name be the only one excluded from the act of amnesty; let not Henry's fame be sullied by such barbarity. Plead, for Constance's sake, speak to your king, to your friend; and although I know Glendower would reject with scorn, all that appeared like favour from the English monarch, still persecution would cease, and the remainder of his troubled life might be passed in peace. Farewell, my cousin, we may never meet more; accept then, what I now send; wear it for the sake of one, who never can forget the days of her childhood, or the kind companion of her early years."

With this letter the black cross was sent, which he had seen her once before touch with her lips. Again and again he kissed both cross and letter, and placing the former on

his heart, vowed that death alone should tear it from him.

The man who brought the letter, had also one line for Clanmorris, who, ere March had read his despatch, was ready for the march. They quickly ascended the rock, and here Clanmorris with his men, took their leave; as the bearer of the letter said that he was commissioned to remain with the Earl, until they reached the town of Gloucester, and there to leave him, if that should happen to be his, the Earl of March's route. As March's intentions tallied with the orders the man had received, they proceeded, and March requesting a detail of what had occurred, the man gave the following history.

“You may remember, my lord, the night when we left the cave; on arriving at the spot where our horses were tied, the men in charge told us that strange reports were afloat of the march of troops from Hereford, and moreover, that some people, strangers to the country, had been watching the direction

taken by these horses. We mounted, but had not ridden above a couple of miles, when our progress was interrupted by what appeared to be a considerable number of cavalry, carousing after a march; on approaching, we found that our suspicions were correct. As they were not prepared, we dashed forward, overthrew those who were mounted, and scattered the remainder; the horses taken, proved a valuable acquisition. The men, however, were allowed to escape, as we had not time to drag along prisoners; from one, however, we learnt, that Davy Howell had failed in raising the border counties, as was intended; that some great plot had been discovered against the king, and that England was disturbed by the arrests consequent on the conspiracy; moreover, that the whole county of Merioneth was in a few days to be filled with troops, as it was strongly suspected that Owen Glendower was somewhere hid in the fastnesses of that county. The idea of retreat therefore became impossible, and our prince,

with his usual hardihood, determined to attack the castle of Dolgellan, and if successful, to call out the old Welch bands, and join the Scotch, and the risings, which were expected in the Northern counties. We halted the following day, and at night marched towards the castle. Our scouts came in with the information, that the place had just been occupied by a body of English; we found our advance thus cut off, and retreat was impossible; still it was thought that Howell had some five or six hundred men with him, on the borders, and Glendower determined on attempting to reach him. By a night attack on a negligently guarded post of the English, we managed to cut our way through the enemy, but on our advancing, we met fugitives from Howell's force, and no hope of safety now remained, except by following our old Welch custom of separating, and meeting again a few days hence, at some named spot; our chief appointed the mountain of Cair Idris as the post at which we were to reas-

semble. I accompanied Glendower and Lady Constance, with old Griffiths, all in the dress of peasants, and having turned loose our horses, we absolutely threaded the surrounding force; and although our prince once nearly discovered himself, when an English soldier made some remarks about Lady Constance, and talked of appropriating her to himself, still, her presence of mind here saved us,—she made a sign to us, and taking the soldier aside, whispered something to him, and we were allowed to proceed.

“The following night we found ourselves in the middle of a morass, and from fear of the soldiery, who were in possession of the bridge, which it was requisite to traverse, we there passed the night. Lady Constance slept on her grandfather’s cloak, her head resting on his knees. The following morning our dear lady was too ill to proceed, but luckily the troops had decamped; a cart was procured, which the prince drove, and thus we reached the foot of the hill. We carried Lady Con-

stance to the top, and strange to say, so greatly did her strength of mind uphold her, that the following morning she was again well; I never can forget her grandfather's anxiety, or the tender way in which he watched over her; not that I believe there was one of Glendower's soldiers who had been with us, would not have felt the same for the Lady Constance; but I heard our prince twice muttering to himself of France, and his granddaughter; he then hung over her, and accused himself of cruelty, and I am much mistaken, if his mind does not incline towards France, if it can be reached.

“We waited until the following day on the mountain, and not above four out of our whole company arrived, the rest were captured, or had betaken themselves to their homes. I know not what the prince had resolved, but he suddenly wrote the letter I have just given you, my lord, and when Lady Constance gave me her letter, her eyes were red with tears,

and she said much about first seeing you safe to Gloucester, but not to delay my return."

"Would it be possible, friend, to lead me to your chief?" enquired the earl.

"Sir knight," replied the man, "I am still a soldier of Glendower's, his orders were peremptory. I neither dare, or (if I dare) would disobey them; ere three days are elapsed, I hope again to be with my master, but I can bear any message you may choose to send."

The earl in vain urged him to change his purpose, but finding it hopeless, when arrived at the spot where he was to lose his guide, he prepared letters for Glendower and Constance, and putting them into the hands of the man, permitted him to depart.

Perhaps, notwithstanding his former aspirations, never did individual feel less gratitude for the boon of liberty just conferred; for much as he wished when in the cave to have been able to join his king, now that his sovereign's danger was over, he much more desired to

have seen once more his fair cousin ; much he fancied he had to say, and much to hear, which now might be put off for an indefinite period, if not for ever ! He dreaded the dangers which she would soon encounter, and would have given worlds to have seen Glendower once more to remonstrate with him on the selfishness of allowing her to remain his companion in so dangerous a position. In his epistle to Glendower, he spoke much on this topic, but the messenger with his letters never reached their destination, nor was he ever heard of more.

CHAPTER VIII.

Oh, England! France hath in thee found out
A nest of hollow bosoms, which he fills
With treacherous crowns; and three corrupted men have
Confirm'd conspiracy with fearful France,
And by their hands this grace of kings must die.

SHAKESPEARE.

A FEW days anterior to the date of the Earl of March's visit to Owen's Cave, the council so suddenly called in a previous chapter met. In the adjoining chamber were all those who were supposed to be able to throw any light on the subject.

The council being assembled, the door was thrown open, and the king entered. Bowing gracefully to each as he passed, he seated him-

self at the head of the table, and without preamble addressed the nobles :—

“ My lords, and my very good counsellors, we this day, to our utmost sorrow, have heard that some even of our most trusted friends, disregarding of the honour of England and the welfare of this realm, have plotted together (when all our energies should have been turned towards the subjection of our enemy of France) to subvert the throne which we have mounted in lawful succession to the king our most noble father. We are filled with still greater sorrow, when we find that some on whom our benefits have been most profusely showered have been foremost in this plot. My lords, in your hands we leave the disentanglement of this conspiracy, and hereby we command that such as our most honourable privy council may deem right to bring to judgment, may be tried before a commission, over which the Earl-Marshal of England may preside, assisted by Sir T. Erpingham, and such lords and judges as our

council may deem most fitting. Would that our reign could have passed without this stain ; but God's will be done.

" Earl Marshal," continued Henry, " you will sift thoroughly, and cast aside all evidence where doubt can exist. Give to the prisoners every facility for proving their innocence ; and even if they be guilty, should their motives be such as does not compromise the honour of our realm, let your king be made aware of it. Our brother of Gloucester has notice from us of the steps already taken. Him we leave in council to represent ourselves. My friends, we trust implicitly on your zeal." Henry then quitted the council.

David Gamme was then summoned, and from various sources evidence was collected as to individuals concerned in the plot. The three principal conspirators, however, appeared to be the Earl of Cambridge, Lord Scrope, and Sir Thomas Grey, who were each on the following day, as they were brought in prisoners,

ordered for trial on the second of August, ten and twelve days being thus granted for the preparation for their trial.

However much Leonard would in general have wished to be brought prominently into notice, it may be doubted whether he would not in this present instance have waived the honour of this special mission, if instead he might have been allowed to conduct Mary to Southampton; in addition, the object of the mission was not quite to his taste. He executed it, nevertheless, with all success. Simon was seized at his own house. Two men muffled in coats, their horses apparently much jaded, as they turned the angle of the house met them face to face; seeing Simon a prisoner, they turned their horses' heads, and attempted to escape. Leonard and some of the troopers, whose steeds were fresh, soon came up with them; they made a desperate resistance, and three of the men were wounded before they could be secured. At last, however, they were dragged from their horses,

and, with their hands tied, were carried to Southampton. The two prisoners protested against being seized without any charge being alleged against them; but Leonard, although it was too dark to distinguish either their countenances or their dress, felt sure that they belonged to the party who had before met at Simon's house. He then examined the barn, and found concealed under two feet of corn arms for two hundred men, bows, battle-axes, and swords. He now proceeded to Southampton. On arrival, the prisoners were consigned by Leonard to the sheriff, who gave him to his surprise receipts for the bodies of Lord Scrope and Sir Thomas Grey in addition to his former prisoner.

Having thus executed his commission, he went to David Gamme's quarters, where he found the old knight and Mary. The pleasure of this meeting was to him much damped, when he reflected that perhaps Mary might not thank him for the part he had taken in the capture of her guardian. She held out her

hand, however, and smilingly expressed her pleasure at his return.

"I fear me," said Hastings, "you would not thus deal by me did you but know what has occurred during my absence "

"I know only," replied she, "that you have been doing your duty to your king and country, and for the rest I have your pledge and that of your noble friend for the safety of my guardian."

Leonard having related what had happened, added, that as both Lord Scrope and Sir Thomas Grey had been arrested, the probability was that the trial would take place as soon as possible, and he advised Mary that notwithstanding the pledge that they had both given for Simon's safety, and which Gamme would of course see redeemed, she should in her evidence say as little regarding Simon as could be done consistent with truth, for the indignation of the people might endanger his safety, even under the guarantee of his monarch's protection."

"But how," replied Mary, "can I forbear, when, as Sir Roger Trevor has already schooled me, I shall be sworn on the holy cross to say all I know of their transactions?"

"Young gentleman," said Sir Roger, whose position as justiciary of Cornwall made him ever ready to resent an appearance of attack on English jurisprudence, "you know little of the beauty of our laws, or you would see how impossible it is to equivocate; and as for our miserable mobs, (always excepting Wat Tyler's bands, headed by the mad priest John Ball,) why one good spear would dissipate a legion."

"Ay," said Leonard, "one such spear as was wielded at the 'Ringwood races,' as some villainous wags are pleased to call your little skirmish which ended so prosperously."

Sir Roger would have desired to treat Leonard for his taunt as did Alexander his friend Clitus; but luckily, nothing in the shape of missile was near at hand: he contented himself, therefore, by denouncing him as an impertinent young jackanapes, and David Gamme

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"But how," replied Harry, "can I learn when, as Sir Roger Trevor has already offered me, I shall be sworn in the next term to get all I know of their transactions?"

"Young gentleman," said Sir Roger, whose position as justice of the peace made him ever ready to render an assistance of advice on English jurisprudence, "you are a little of the beauty of our laws, so you would see how impossible it is to surmount, and as for our miserable moors, always extending to the first bounds, headed by the most cruel John Bell, why one good spear would disperse a legion."

"Ay," said Leonard, "one such spear as was wielded at the 'King's War' in some villainous ways are pressed to call your little skirmish which ended in perpetuity."

Sir Roger would have desired to treat Leonard for his taunt as did Alexander the Great Clitus; but he only, smiling at the image of himself, at length he consented himself, and then he dismissed him as an intruder. David Garrick

interrupted further dispute by saying that "Mary need be under no apprehension on the score hinted by Leonard, as he would take care that no accident should happen; but that should the court permit her to be silent on those points which criminated Simon, it would render all things more easy. The king has promised me," added he, "that Simon's life shall be spared if his confession be open and true; but he cannot be permitted to remain longer in the realm."

"By St. Bridget! a right, just, and noble king," exclaimed Sir Roger. "I have heard nothing since I quitted old Deb. that so rejoices my heart. I'll see him immediately; and he shall transfer to me his right of guardianship, and then, mistress, we'll see whether you can refuse longer to make the old knight happy."

"Do not deem me unkind, Sir Roger," answered Mary, "but till a few days ago we were strangers, and should I ever find a father, which may heaven in its mercy grant,

would he thank his child for having thus received charity from the hands of one unknown to him?"

"All balderdash! all foolishness!" replied impetuously the old knight; "why I have written to Deborah that you are coming; and the room, and the garden, and everything is preparing for you; and I tell you flatly, that without you I stir not one step. And you want, forsooth, to go and shut yourself up with some toothless old woman,—and why? because you are determined, like every one of your sex, to have your own way, and break the old man's heart; but I'll to Simon"——

"He," interrupted Gamme, "is permitted to see no one till the trials are over. It is not, however, necessary for Mary to make her resolve until that time, and at present no one, Sir Roger, will dispute with you the guardianship."

Some days were yet to elapse before the trials commenced. They were spent by our knight, accompanied by Mary and Leonard Hastings,

in viewing the preparations that were making for war.

It was a hard contest between the two who should be most devoted, and it was self-evident that Mary's heart by each was most rudely assaulted. Sir Roger's *pétit-soins* rather resembled the growls and caresses of an affectionate bear; whilst Leonard, who generally was bold and confident, grew meek as a lamb, and bashful as a nun. He sometimes thought of his master, but, to the shame of human nature be it spoken, these thoughts were few and far between; and an acquaintanceship of but a few days had driven from his mind old recollections and old friendships. To sum up all, he was irretrievably in love.

As for Mary, whatever her feelings were, no one could judge. She treated Leonard with distance, Gamme with respect, Sir Roger with regard; and it was already pretty evident that her scruples were giving way, and her feelings tended towards Cornwall.

CHAPTER IX.

Nay, but the man that was his bedfellow,
Whom he hath cloy'd and graced with princely favours,
That he should for a foreign purse so sell
His sovereign's life to death and treachery !

THE second of August at length arrived. Under a canopy of tents sat the fatal commission. A cordon of guards kept all from approaching, except such as were duly summoned. In the northern angle of this encampment were some small tents, in each of which a prisoner was guarded. The witnesses occupied similar tents in the opposite angle. At the extreme end of a long table was seated the Earl-Marshal of England ; on his right and left, the Duke of York and Sir Thomas Erpingham. Six judges

and six other lords formed the court. The tent was lined with black, and near his seat the banner of each lord who sat on the commission was planted in the ground.

In the rear of each line of commissioners a triple row of benches were to be seen elevated one above the other, and occupied by the principal nobles and knights of Henry's camp. A small stage, elevated about a foot from the ground, faced the chair of the Earl-Marshal: on this eventually were to be placed the prisoners.

On the court being seated, the Earl-Marshal first read the commission, and then gave them the instructions he had received from his majesty. The three principal prisoners were then summoned. The Earl of Cambridge first appearing, dressed in deep mourning, with downcast eyes and faltering step, marched up to the place allotted for him on the platform. Lord Scrope followed similarly dressed, but with the air of one confident of his innocence. Sir Thomas Grey came last. His countenance was

the reverse of that with which imagination would clothe a conspirator. His features were strikingly handsome; his stature far above the middle size; and there was an air of openness and truth in his whole demeanour which betokened an inward consciousness of rectitude of purpose. Clad in complete armour, he proudly moved to his seat, and, taking off his helmet, bowed to the court and to the assembled auditors. A whisper ran round, and it was evident that all inwardly hoped for the bold knight's acquittal.

The Earl Marshal then rising from his seat, opened the proceedings. "Earl of Cambridge," said he, "and you Sir Thomas Grey, stand charged before this court, of having traitorously conspired to collect a body of armed men, to conduct Edmund, Earl of March, to the frontiers of Wales, and there to proclaim him the rightful heir to the British crown, (in case Richard the Second were actually dead),* against the pretension of our gracious

* The idea was very prevalent in England, during the

king, Henry the Fifth, who you intended to style 'The usurper of England,' and that you purposed to destroy the king and his brothers, with other nobles of the land. And you, Lord Scrope, are charged with consenting to the said treasonable designs, and concealing them from the king. Earl of Cambridge, are you guilty, or not guilty?"

On Cambridge being thus addressed, he answered. "My lords and judges, is it likely, think you, that Richard of Coningsburgh, created Earl of Cambridge by our king, and each day receiving fresh benefits from his majesty, should desire or compass his benefactor's death? but, my lords and judges, if

reigns of Henry the Fourth and Fifth, that Richard the Second had not perished at the period when historians in general have chosen to deprive him of life, by the hands of assassins. In nearly all the conspiracies which followed during these reigns, the claims of Richard the Second to the throne, were not forgotten, a proviso generally being made in their compacts between the conspirators, such as that in the conspiracy of the Earl of Cambridge, to wit, "Lest Richard the Second should be alive, as some suppose."

false witness be made against me, I pray you to judge me kindly, seeing, that if I be found guilty of this charge, I not only meet the death which I should then most truly merit, but the stamp of ingratitude would be affixed to the name of Coningsburgh, which ages could not obliterate. I pray you mercifully, therefore, to adjudge my cause, as I am guiltless !”

“Henry le Scrope de Masham,” resumed the president, “are you guilty or not guilty?”

“I acknowledge not,” answered Scrope with energy, “the right by which I am tried by such commission; I claim the privilege of an English peer, and to my compeers only, do I deem myself justified in answering.”

“My lord of Scrope,” resumed the president, “this commission supersedes all privileges, and I warn you, that the trial will proceed without reference to your objections. I will, however, supplicate his majesty of his grace, and of his good pleasure, to permit his house of peers to examine the records of this trial, previous to its confirmation.”

“My lord president,” replied Scrope, “and

you my judges, and you (looking round at the benches, which held spectators of every rank) my countrymen, I protest in the most solemn manner against the violation of my privileges, as a peer of England ; but, since an illegally constituted court has been commissioned to examine into the matter, with scorn I repel the charge ! I am totally guiltless ! As regards the imagining of our sovereign's death, I never consented to it, but I did listen to the plots of the conspirators, so that in due time I might discover them to his majesty, and his council. Is there one here, who knows not the favour that King Henry has shown me ? Know ye not, that day after day I have been counsellor and adviser, have dined at the same board, have partaken of the same bed with his majesty ? can Henry de Masham then forget this ? If I am guilty, then the worst of death I deserve for base ingratitude !

On Sir Thomas Grey de Heton being addressed as the others. " My lord Earl Marshal of England," said he, " and you my

judges, I will not stain a life of honour by falsehood, in these my last moments. I have conspired against the usurping king of England, I would have proclaimed Edmund, Earl of March, monarch of this realm, for who, let me ask (and he looked round on the assembled nobles) is bold and base enough to say, that Henry of Monmouth is not a usurper? if there be one, I call him false liar to his face, and (taking off his gauntlet, and throwing it forcibly on the table) defy him to his teeth, now before this court,—at this moment, I would prove on the body of the recreant, whether I am right or wrong;—ay, by the judgment of God. Earl Marshal, I plead guilty, if guilt it can be called; but had I ten thousand lives, each should be sacrificed in upholding the rights of our lawful sovereign.”

“Would, Sir Thomas Grey,” replied the president, “that this spirit had been turned towards those deeds which might have rendered you more illustrious, instead of making

you the associate of the assassin, the disturber of the peace of England."

The prisoners were then withdrawn, and according to the barbarous custom of that period, in cases of high treason, the witnesses were examined without ever being brought face to face with those they witnessed against. The first called was David Gamme, who recounted all that had happened at Simon's house, the conversation he had overheard, and the eventual captivity he had undergone.

Leonard Hastings was then summoned, who corroborated the testimony of Gamme. One of the judges, Robert Hull, interrogated him closely, as to the reason for his absence from his master, and as to where the Earl of March then was? Hastings said, that he had been despatched with a letter to the Earl of Cambridge, from his master, regarding some affairs in Wales, and as that his master had written to the said earl, as being high in confidence with the king." The Earl of Suffolk, one of the commission, then demanded the

letter, which Hastings handed over to the court. In answer to the remaining portion of the interrogatories, he said "that he knew nothing of where the Earl of March now was, but that his master had desired him to wait at Southampton at which place he said he would be three days later; that since that time he had heard nothing of him, and that for more than ten days, he had hourly expected him." He was then questioned as to his master's intimacy with Sir Thomas Grey and the others, to which Hastings replied, that Sir Thomas Grey was his master's greatest friend." Hastings unwittingly, had thus cast suspicion on the Earl of March, which, unfortunately, every thing seemed to strengthen, and a message was despatched to the council, to recommend that an order should be issued for his arrest.

The council first requested Henry's permission, who, with the nobleness natural to him, would not listen to the suspicion, and refused his assent, although he was equally

astonished at his absence, as his injunctions had been positive, for his immediate return after the execution of the commission with which he had been intrusted.

Mary was then summoned before the commission. When she entered, supported by the old knight, a general stir to get sight of the witness, showed how interested they already were in her, as in the former evidence her name had frequently occurred, as the original discoverer of the plot, and the eventual deliverer of the party. Her beauty and modest demeanour prepossessed all in her favour; and when with the sweetness of voice peculiar to woman, she prayed the court to let her give such evidence only as might have no tendency to hurt her guardian; and that the nobles of her country would kindly interpret her motives for the apparently forward step she had taken; and when the tears flowed down her cheeks, from the Earl Marshal's apparently harsh decision, that she must hide nothing, admiration was at its height, and as for the old

knight, he broke out into invectives on the harsh judges, who could thus bring tears into his daughter's eyes.

The Earl Marshal rebuked the old knight for his intemperate zeal for his new protégée, but informed him, that Simon was not put on his trial, and that no harm to him could result from aught she said.

The trial then proceeded, but no more light was thrown on the conspiracy, and some even thought, that the suspected men had been arrested on too slender grounds. Simon was now called, who being questioned, said, "that for the last three weeks preceding his capture, night after night, certain individuals, of which the Earl of Cambridge, Lord Scrope, Sir Thomas Grey, William Howell, Sir Ingram de Umfraville, and John Widderington, had met nightly at his house, in the New Forest, having previously bribed him, Simon, by the most extravagant offers of reward, which he was to receive when the Earl of March was proclaimed king. The first meeting consisted

allegations contained, the trial was soon finished. The judges having deliberated for a short time, the clerk of the court, who was the esquire of the president, proclaimed silence, the Earl Marshal arose, and addressed the prisoners.—

“Lord Scrope de Masham, his most gracious majesty Henry of England, has been pleased to listen to your desire, but he grants you the same, not as a right, but of his own royal kindness. You, therefore, and also the Earl of Cambridge, will to-morrow be adjudged by your peers. For you, Sir Thomas Grey, no plea remains by which your doom can be delayed. Sir Thomas Grey de Heton hold up your hand, and say, can’st thou plead aught in award of the sentence, which it is my duty to pass?”

“Earl Marshal,” replied Grey, “I claim no right by which my doom may be averted, mercy from the house of Lancaster I spurn. Were I now to be liberated, I should act as I have done, and with my latest breath I should

cry, as I do now, with my helmet waving in the air, down, down with Monmouth the usurper ! God bless Edmund, rightful king of England ! But, my friends and brother Englishmen, (as friends I have many under this canopy,) when the executioner's task is over, when Sir Thomas Grey is no more, let not his memory fade from your hearts. He may be what this court may term a traitor to the house of Lancaster,—not to the royalty of England. My last prayer, my last breath, is for the prosperity of my native land, for the glory of England. One pang alone do I feel in leaving this world, one pain alone rends my heart,—my poor young wife! who will convey to her, when her lord, of whom she was so proud, is laid in the cold grave,—who will bear to her his last farewell? who will say to her, as I loved her in this life, when on the threshold of eternity, my last thoughts were of her. Sir Thomas Erpingham, you have ever been my friend, to thee I entrust this charge ; give her this, my collar of knight-

hood, gained in the battle field, when combating the enemies of my country; give it to her, and tell her, that when our child can wield the sword, let him forget all, but that England is his country, France her direst foe. Bear with me, my dear friends and countrymen, and farewell for ever! Once more, God bless my country!"

Notwithstanding the love and veneration that all bore towards Henry, still that so gallant a knight of England should thus be lost to his native land, was grief to every one; although, perhaps, less melting materials than the soldier of the fifteenth century, was not easily to be imagined, at the conclusion of his farewell address, not a dry eye could have been found in court. He bowed respectfully to all as he quitted the tent of judgment, and the commission was dismissed.

It was impossible for Henry to pardon Sir Thomas Grey, owing to the determination expressed by him, of continuing in the same course of rebellion. His duty as a king di-

rected him to strike the blow, although had he followed up the dictates of his own generous mind, he would have wished much to save such a life. Great, nevertheless, was the difficulty experienced by Henry's most trusty counsellors, in procuring the signature of the king to the fatal warrant. The detriment however, being clearly proved to him, which England would sustain, should disturbances agitate the country, during the absence of the army in France, he at last signed the warrant. He could not however bear that so noble a mind should be consigned to the derision of the populace, and that he should be dragged (as was customary, in cases of high treason) as a common felon, on the hurdle, to the place of execution; he consequently remitted that part of the sentence.

The following day he was beheaded at the Northgate, and his head sent to be placed on the gate of Newcastle. The Earl of Cambridge and Lord Scrope, were three days after adjudged to die, by the House of Peers, and

were on the following morning beheaded. Cambridge, throughout had behaved with the greatest meanness, and pusillanimity; first, by (in a confession) giving up the names of all his co-conspirators, and afterwards, by an abject petition for pardon. The head of Scrope was placed on the gate of York, whilst Cambridge, on account of his near alliance to the Earl of March, was spared this posthumous indignity.

CHAPTER X.

He staid not for brake, and he stopped not for stone,
He swam the Eske river, where ford there was none.

MARMION.

THE principal conspirators having met the doom which they so richly merited, it became a matter of importance to seize their various agents, and thus to quash in its birth, a rebellion, which might otherwise prevent the carrying into effect those great plans which were meditated by the English monarch.

Howell was soon seized, but being a Welchman, Henry was enabled to extend to him the clemency, which it was his delight to exercise. Widderington had escaped to Scotland, but

Sir Ingram de Umfraville was in Southampton at the time of the arrest of Simon. He was seated at supper with the Duke of Gloucester, the king's brother, when his page, who had by accident seen Simon, when delivered over to the sheriff, de la Mark Rose, came and whispered it hastily in the ear of his master. He also told him, that two other prisoners were brought in with Simon, that he had conversed with the troopers, who had examined the barn, and that it was evident that all was discovered; Umfraville pleaded sickness, and left the table. Half an hour after, he was on his road to Scotland.

Immediately on Simon's arrival at Southampton, he had been brought before the council, and a full pardon being granted, he gave up the names of all the conspirators, and divulged the ramifications of the whole plot: but was imprisoned, and not permitted to hold intercourse with any one, until the trials were over. Warrants had been immediately issued for the arrest of all, who were then at

large, and more especially for Umfraville, as in his possession were all the papers connected with the plot, as far as regarded the Scotch and the Northern counties. Umfraville had, however, escaped; orders for his arrest were despatched in every direction. Sir Ingram, knowing that all the main roads would be closed to him, or that the pursuit would be too hot for him to escape, chose the bye-paths and circuitous routes, avoiding all towns. In this manner, occasionally getting assistance from the small villages at night, and at others trusting to the fruits and raw vegetables, that he might chance to find, he arrived at Carlisle; through this city he was obliged to pass. Having, however, refreshed his horse just before he entered, at the dawn of day he deliberately walked his horse through the town. On reaching the long narrow bridge, he passed the guard, but when arrived at the centre, he found a second guard, drawn up at the other side, to oppose his passage, without his first accounting for himself; this he

was fully aware was impossible, and since in all probability, a description of his person had been sent to Carlisle, he would be immediately recognised, as a slant in his eye rendered his countenance peculiar. For a moment he hesitated what to do, but at length taking his resolution, he backed his horse to the parapet wall, then, suddenly rushing forward, darted his spurs into the sides of his noble charger, the opposite parapet was cleared, and the astonished guard beheld horse and rider in mid-air, he boldly holding his horse up, to pitch, as it were, in a masterly manner into the stream. The river was swollen with rain, and the stream ran so strongly, that it appeared morally impossible for either to live. Sir Ingram and his horse disappeared, and in admiration of the gallantry of the deed, the guard remained as it were, stupified. It was long before the engulfed horseman emerged from the bubbling flood, and then at a great distance from the bridge: although Sir Ingram was in his seat, his escape from a watery

grave appeared impossible, when suddenly they beheld him make for land: the guard now mounted for pursuit, but so intersected was the bank with dykes, that they were forced to make a considerable circuit to reach the spot. Sir Ingram now guided his horse to a steep bank, termed the Stanmers. The animal at first failed in its attempt to ascend, but the rider, throwing off his large horseman's cloak, which was saturated with wet, bounded to the bank, and his steed was soon seen standing by his side. The country Sir Ingram well knew, and he saw, that a short time was still left him, before the guard could have made the circuit before mentioned, and he also knew that they could not cut off his retreat; he quietly, therefore, stood by his horse, until he thought it was sufficiently recovered for a second struggle, and when the enemy, out of breath from their haste, but confident of their prey, were seen approaching him, he suddenly vaulted into his saddle, and dashed forward: although his steed was far superior

to those belonging to his pursuers, it was still a doubtful case, as his had used such extraordinary exertions in ascending the bank ; three only were closing with him, when suddenly halting, he struck the foremost from his horse, by a back blow of his sword, but the weapon was broken from the force of the blow ; throwing it away, he was then forced to trust to the fleetness of his steed, who failed him not in this emergency, and reaching the Eske, he plunged fearlessly in. Here the race terminated, as his pursuers had no inclination to follow him further, and remained on the southern bank. Having reached the opposite side, he quietly dismounted, and taking off the light cap in which he had ridden, requested them to send their chief to drink with him ! He then rode leisurely away.

The news of this exploit* flew rapidly to the

* The feat at the bridge of Carlisle, really happened, but the hero of the tale was a noted outlaw, by name "Christie's Will."

king at Southampton, and he, on whom a gallant deed was never thrown away, wrote a pardon with his own hand, and forthwith despatched a messenger, summoning him to join the array of England, who "could not then spare one of her most gallant knights."

Sir Ingram de Umfraville had, as many others, lands both in England and Scotland, as grants had been made by Edward, when he first overran the latter country, to many on the borders, who preferred an ignoble treaty with the enslaver of their native land, to joining their countrymen, heart and hand. Thus, the Scottish border nobles, could with ease throw off their allegiance, and having lands in both countries, their loyalty hung lightly on them, and we must not condemn such as traitors, or judge them by the same rule, as those who were differently situated. Henry saw this, and by a well-timed act of grace, and from the frank and noble manner in which it was conferred, the foe was converted into one of his firmest friends.

With regard to Wales, intelligence of the meditated outbreak, had reached the king's lieutenants in that quarter in sufficient time to enable them (as we have already seen) to put down with ease, the small body that had collected. The followers of Glendower were seized, and two of the principal were immediately sent prisoners to Southampton; little, however, could be elicited from them, except that when the rebellion broke out, the Earl of March was in Glendower's cave. This, when added to the evidence of Simon, his mysterious absence, and the fact of this rebellion being entirely for his benefit, persuaded the council of his guilt, and even those who in the previous councils had taken his part, now solicited the king to sanction his arrest.

Henry answered, "We have full confidence in the Earl of March. Whatever may appear doubtful, he will clear up. We would as soon doubt ourselves as our cousin." Henry, however confident of the loyalty of his friend, was most anxious for his return, as he feared that

some misfortune must have occurred thus to detain him.

March himself, whom we left at Gloucester, was conscious of the suspicion that might attach to him from his protracted absence, more especially as rebellion had broken out during his sojourn in Wales, and also as the rebels had he understood declared their object, to wit, to seat him on the throne. Travelling night and day, he arrived at length at Southampton. On entering the palace he met the Earl of Suffolk, with whom he had been on terms of intimacy, but he, pretending not to see him, attempted to move on without parley. March, however, defeated the attempt, and said, "How is this, Earl of Suffolk? has so short an absence caused March to be forgotten of his friends; or has some invidious cloud passed over the sunshine of our friendship?"

"No, Earl of March: Suffolk forgets not so easily his friends, did they not forget themselves. The Earl of March's conscience should best answer the question why to him a loyal

subject of Henry of England cannot hold out the hand of amity."

"Earl of Suffolk," answered March proudly, "you will grieve for the words you have now spoken; but to the king only am I accountable for my actions." Saying this, he passed on towards the chamber where King Henry was holding his council. The earl, as by privilege permitted, stepped into the midst of the counsellors. No one greeted his approach, save the king's brother Gloucester, and the old knight Sir Thomas Erpingham. The former bowed, but Erpingham offering his hand approached with him the sort of throne on which Henry was seated. Stepping from it, the monarch said cordially, "Welcome, thrice welcome, Earl of March. You are accused, earl, of conspiracy against our majesty; of having incited revolt in Wales; of having leagued with that arch-rebel, Owen Glendower. Our most trusty counsellors would have urged your arrest; even your best friends have trembled for your honour; but Henry of Monmouth gives not his confidence by halves.

Edmund Mortimer, we trust you as ourselves ; and thus before all (taking him by the hand) we show our confidence in your honour. Speak, Mortimer ; show these assembled lords that your king has not misjudged your loyalty."

"Thanks, my most gracious sovereign," replied March ; "thanks for the confidence which you have so generously bestowed. The Earl of March will not easily forget this day."

He then detailed briefly what had occurred.

King Henry here took up the speech, and said, "Since our trusty council may be desirous of knowing the reason of the Earl of March's visit to Owen Glendower, we hereby declare, that it was in obedience to our commands ; but proceed, Earl of March."

March then detailed the cause of his captivity, and eventually produced the letter of Glendower, which entirely cleared up all regarding which there could still be a doubt. Gloucester and others then went up to the earl, and each expressed his regret that for a

moment they should have deemed his conduct suspicious. Edmund easily forgave them, though their conduct too truly showed him the value of such friendships; but, turning to Sir Thomas Erpingham, "To you, Sir Thomas," he said, "how can I express my thanks? when all deserted me but my king, you stood by me; you trusted me; though that even was hid from you which our sovereign alone knew. Sir Thomas, I thank you most earnestly—most heartily I thank you;" and then falling on his knee before Henry, "once more, my liege, I tender my allegiance;" rising up, he continued, "if any before could doubt my sentiments, let them know now that he who would raise the standard of revolt, and favour the claims of any but Henry of Monmouth to the throne of this realm, renders the Earl of March his bitterest foe."

Thus ended this conspiracy, and its consequences; as, however, times might change and as the whole of March's defence would always rest on Glendower's letter, which might

be destroyed, it was thought advisable to give the Earl of March a free pardon for all offences that he might have committed previous to this date:—which circumstance by many in after-years was thought an evidence of his participation in the schemes of the conspirators; but the practice of giving pardons in those days was common where absolutely no offence had been committed,—so little could the justice of rulers be depended on, when the death of an individual was deemed requisite.

CHAPTER XI.

For on the land, or on the sea,
Where'er the breezes blaw that,
The British flag shall bear the grie,
And win the day for a' that !

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

THE trial over, Mary's heart felt lighter than it had done since the commencement of this fatal conspiracy ; for she had feared, notwithstanding the pledges given by Gamme and Leonard for her guardian's life, that justice would not allow the escape of so great a criminal ; and although he was banished from his country, still the punishment was much milder than had been expected by even his most sanguine friends.

Mary, in compliance with the wishes of all her friends (Leonard included), agreed to place herself under the care of the good old knight, Sir Roger Trevor. His delight was uncontrollable; and his long stories of Deborah, and still longer accounts of the beauties of Briersley, endless!

“ Ah ! Deborah will be right proud of you, my pretty Mary ; and glad am I she has found such a companion to solace her old age, for I have been nigh cruel towards the old dame, leaving her thus to her own poor self, even though it be to fight for Henry of Monmouth ! but mistress Deborah has well learned how to manage the old knight, and not one step should I have been allowed to stir had not my sword been required in the service of our most gallant monarch. ‘ Roger,’ she would say, ‘ to fight for Henry of Monmouth alone shall you leave Deborah or Briersley, and could France be conquered without you, you should never leave either !’ But she is a kind-hearted worthy soul ; and though she rules an old worn-

tuitive genius which enabled one so young thus to seize in one comprehensive grasp all that belonged to military science; and whilst the aged succumbed in awe at his surpassing talent, the young gloried in their youthful leader, and with heart and soul vowed themselves to his service.

tinued morose and savage towards all, particularly those whom he considered to be the instruments of his misfortune.

An inordinate thirst for gold had ever ruled him ; there were no lengths he would not have gone, no crime he would not have committed, no foul deed he would not have undertaken, if the reward had been gold, almighty gold ! For gold, or rather with the hopes of one day being richly rewarded, he became Mary's guardian ; for gold did he agree to, and aid that plot which had nearly cost him his existence ; much had he received, much more was he sure of receiving if the plot had succeeded, and England been deprived of her justly loved sovereign. So bright were the prospects held out to him, so magnificent the reward he expected, that his common sense seemed to give way, and he almost fancied his avaricious hopes realized, and brilliant visions of future honours danced before him ; he felt as if there was naught to which he could not aspire ; naught he could demand that must not be

granted when once the conspirators were possessed of absolute power, and their monarch had ceased to exist ! Suddenly, at one stroke, all his golden dreams, his airy castles, were cast down ; dispossessed of even the cherished gold by which his aid had been purchased ; banished the country where he had found such full play for his avaricious feelings and sordid mind, his fury at times knew no bounds ; and curses were showered upon the head of Sir David Gamme and Leonard Hastings, and sometimes even Mary shared his gross abuse.

“ Verily, I fostered a serpent in my bosom when I fostered you, mistress ; when friendless and destitute I gave you a home, and succoured the weeping unknown babe ; or rather, I should say, I deigned to protect the neglected bastard of some gay noble : for, by my belief, you are nothing better than the child of infamy and shame, or some one ere this would have claimed you, and rewarded him to whom you had so long been a burden. Small is my recompense ; gold I have none to show ; and

you, ungrateful girl, who might by your industry have enriched my declining years, most viper-like have turned and spit your venom on me ! Most admirable act ! Most praiseworthy reward for all my kindness ! Basest of women ! disgrace of your sex ! Go, and rejoice in your boasted feelings of loyalty and virtue ! for Simon scorns and spurns you ! Go, seek rank ; be the minion of some great noble, and may his brutality be a just return for your devilish conduct."

" You are severe, Simon," Mary would reply ; " I merit not to be thus wronged, and I feel I am not the child of infamy or disgrace ; I have acted as every loyal subject should do : I have been true to my king, and a friend to my country ; in saving the life of the former, I have more than saved the latter ; heaven has made me the weak instrument of preserving England from falling into the hands of conspirators ; heaven, through me, has stayed the nation from imbruing their hands in the blood of the best of monarchs, and from staining for

ever their honour by the foulest murder ever conceived in England."

Similar conversations oft passed between the guardian and his ward, when the plot was first discovered ; but ere they parted, nature seemed in some degree to have overcome Simon's avaricious and harsh feelings ; and when he beheld Mary distressed, nay almost miserable, at leaving so great a wretch as he was, he relented, and a tear stood in his eye as, imprinting a kiss on his worn and well bronzed cheek, she prayed heaven to guide him from Satan unto God, to tear the scales from his eyes, to show him vice in its natural deformity, and teach him to seek that peace of mind which honesty alone can bestow.

Henry now turned his whole mind and attention to the grand projects he had in view ; and not only were his measures conducive to this point, but they had a prospective effect on the well-being of England. As was the custom in those days, the Sergeant-at-arms, John de Burgh, had placed under arrest all merchant

vessels which could be found in the unprivileged ports ; and the Cinque Ports, as bound by the terms of their original contract with the crown, had each dispatched fifty vessels. De Burgh had not, however, limited his exertions to the British seas, but had visited in person the Duke of Holland, who had provided one hundred and ninety vessels ; the King of Portugal had sent an equal number to his good brother of England. The great difficulty Henry experienced was then, as it now is, in manning his fleet ; and impressment was enforced in all its rigour. But he foresaw that should the war in which he was about to engage be of a protracted nature, the system then adopted would leave him at the mercy of his enemies, as the vessels sent by the Cinque Ports were only engaged to serve for fifteen days : and although this term, from the extraordinary popularity of the war, and still more from that of Henry himself, was prolonged, he well knew that when landed in France, each ship would return to its port, and leave him

interrupting the old man; "thinkst thou, Glendower, I would forsake one who has fostered my infancy, and been the guide of my youth?" As she spoke, and threw her arms round his neck, he felt the tear of sorrow, that unknown to himself, had escaped. The heart of the stern warrior almost relented; overcome by his feelings he answered not, and a dead silence ensued. Struggling, however, against his softer emotions, "Constance," he resumed, "it is in vain for me to deceive you or myself; part we must, and that ere to-morrow's sun has set; everything is arranged, nothing can alter my determination; leave me you must, yes, leave me, a wretched old man, who has but existed for the defence of his country, and the happiness of his child, and who at the eleventh hour sacrifices all he loves and cherishes, all that could make existence bearable, or soothe the short period allotted him on earth. For thou hast been the guiding star of my wanderings; when surrounded by hardship

and misery, thy smile has cheered me, in every danger and difficulty, thy gentleness and affection have been my sole support. I have looked upon thee as an angel sent by heaven, to bless my last hours in this world, my dying moments, in this 'vale of tears;' but it is the will of God to part us, and part we must,—'tis a heavy blow for my old age, but must be borne. Every cup of happiness we quaff contains some bitter in this life, and oft when I have listened to thy sweet converse, has the thought of separation cast a shade o'er my brow, and clouded my bliss. Weaken me not, my child, by prayers or intercessions,—it must be :—the die is cast," he continued, kissing her moistened cheek ; " and didst thou know the pang that rends my heart, thou wouldst pity the old man, and not deter him from acting justly, though there be death in the deed."

Constance replied not, save, by again throwing herself on Glendower's neck, and giving vent to a flood of heartfelt tears, whilst

he endeavoured to explain to her the urgent necessity for their immediate separation.

“I cast thee, Constance, on the troubled sea of life ; I place thee young and attractive, as thou art, in a scene of temptation and vice, amidst fascinating licentiousness, and open immorality ; armed with no shield, save thy innocence, possessing no protector, save thy God. Friends thou wilt find in France, many false ones, few sincere : but be vigilant, the enemy is abroad ; and oft is the form of deceit or vice hidden under the smile of friendship and the voice of affection ; judge and act for thyself, let none bias thee, pray for direction, and heaven shall guide thee.

“Thou art warm-hearted, Constance ; beware, lest the very beauty of thy character, lead thee into a snare ! Thou art lovely, and will everywhere be followed and admired ; how much more so then, in such a court as that of Isabel of France, where beauty is more valued than virtue's self, and a bright eye more sought than riches ; but, remember,

deceit is abroad. The perfidy of man is ever plotting the disgrace of the pure, the destruction of the lovely; beware in what path thou treadest, dangers surround thee on every side, it is but the most skilful mariner, who can steer clear of such shoals of guilt, such quick-sands of licentiousness, as are ever found in the court of France. Open vice is seldom dangerous : but when it assumes the part of virtues, and appears under every fascinating form, the temptation is great, the trial severe. Let not the impure air thou breathest, the profligate atmosphere thou dost inhale, lessen thy strong sense of right, or impair the bloom of thy pure feelings ! May thy admiration of virtue be never decreased, or thy horror of vice deadened ! may such sentiments, and the love of thy God, be to thee a tower of defence against the enemy. Think not all this superfluous, my child ; too soon, alas ! will experience teach thee the value of my counsel ; for we are but weak creatures at the best, and vice gradually

creeps in, smothers every early feeling, imperceptibly decreases our love of truth, artfully undermines our virtue, and we find ourselves carried away by the same torrent, and actuated by the same views, as the weak and foolish herd. Thou art too frail a plant, too precarious a bud, to be exposed to such rude blasts, such destructive tempests; God grant thou mayst pass through the ordeal pure and undefiled!"

Constance felt as if her heart must burst, but she solemnly promised to act as her grandfather wished, and not a murmur escaped her lips. Glendower knew 'twas in vain to prolong the struggle of parting, he had therefore been giving Constance his final advice, and managed everything for their journey; and on the morrow, calling for his old follower and retainer, Salisbury, he gave him as a last token of his friendship and esteem, his dagger and knife,* which the latter hung up amid his ancestral armour, saying,—“These the

* Owen Glendower's dagger and knife are in the possession of the present owner of Rug.

last gifts of Owen Glendower, I place here, as heir-looms to my descendants: and may they be cherished and kept as an everlasting memorial of him, the greatest of Wales' warriors, the noblest of her patriots!" Then turning to Glendower, "In safety will I conduct the Lady Constance to the court of France: 'tis I know, the first desire of thine heart, my prince, and shall be performed, even at the risk of my existence!"

Glendower's thanks were as short and sincere, as his character was brave and daring; but Salisbury needed not words, serving his prince was in itself sufficient reward.

Constance early retired to her couch, but not to rest, the image of her aged and persecuted grandfather stood before her; the idea that she was to be cast friendless on the world, that she was to exchange a life of hardship and privation, for one of luxury and temptation, and that destiny obliged her to forsake Glendower, even when surrounded by misery and danger, occupied her mind, and most effectively drove "nature's soft nurse" away.

Rising from her couch, she opened the case-
ment, and gazed upon the scene below.

“ She felt her breast become more light,
Beneath the freshness of the night,
Cool was the silent sky, though calm,
And bathed her brow, with airy balm.”

All nature slept, the songster roosted on the bough, the very leaves moved not, e'en the music of the nightingale was hushed, darkness and silence reigned supreme, and night had stretched her leaden sceptre o'er a slumbering world. It was as if the general pulse of life stood still, and nature made a pause ; but one star was visible, brilliant as the flash of beauty's eye, yet soft as woman's voice : Constance looked upon it, until she almost felt it might influence her destiny ; she experienced “ that holy calm that looks to heavenly musing, her heart fled from nature's self to nature's God,” her soul, filled with immortal longings, sought to unburden itself at the Throne of Grace, and struggled within her to flee away and be at rest ! This inward

struggle, this inward longing, this thirst for the future, this distaste of earth and earthly things, this thought of heaven and heavenly things, this wish for spiritual happiness, this desire for endless glory, what is it but an earnest of immortality, a foretaste of the future, to impress upon the mind its short stay in this world, its glorious hopes of a host to cheer us on earth, and guide us to heaven! An image of youth and beauty crossed her mind, and imperceptibly even to herself, she muttered, "Yes, it must be so; I have long and dearly loved him, though he knows it not,—perhaps, ne'er shall know it;—but my wretched heart, be still, be still." She knelt, she prayed; and the moon, which at that moment was rising o'er the mountain's brow, seemed to smile on the prayer of faith and innocence: she supplicated for heavenly protection to be extended towards her grandfather's age, and towards her own youth and inexperience: and was that all? alas, no! the woman stood confessed, and faintly, and as if fearing her own voice, she uttered, "bless him, guide him, protect

him, strengthen him with the power of thy might, my Saviour, and nerve his arm to fight boldly in the righteous cause, for his king, his country, and his God."

Prayer, as it ever does, when true and sincere, refreshed and tranquillized her mind; she rose a better, and a happier being, and again gazed upon the scene that had so suddenly changed. The moon shone brilliantly over all, that but an hour ago, was immersed in darkness; the star, as if ashamed of being thus easily eclipsed, was fast sinking in the horizon; there was a freshness in the breath of night that cooled her fevered brain; she wept no more, but again praying for strength to bear the parting with fortitude, and for courage to endure as a christian the many perils that would cross her path, when cast on the bosom of a cold and heartless world, she retired to rest, and soon became unconscious of the dangers that surrounded her, forgetful of the present, and the past. But short was her period of repose; ere day had dawned, she was prepared for departure, and

ere the sun had gained its meridian height, the heart-rending farewell had been uttered, the warrior had looked his last upon all that he loved and cherished upon earth, all that to his aged eyes was the perfection of beauty and goodness; and the warm-hearted and miserable girl had imprinted her final kiss on the furrowed cheek of her beloved, and only parent. They had parted, perhaps, never more to meet on earth

Constance started with Salisbury as her only guide: and Glendower pursued his weary way, feeling reckless of all, and indifferent towards every one, accompanied by his faithful friend and harper, Griffiths. The bright smile had fled, his country was enslaved, earth to him was a desert, and existence but a curse.

Stern and sad were the reflections of the Welch prince, when the last link was snapped that bound him to his race; but time had he none to indulge this melancholy mood, as one of the serfs of the territory of the departed master of Rug, brought information that the

sheriff from Dolgellau was at the distance of only two leagues, hurrying towards Corwen ; the retreat of Glendower was therefore cut off from Merionethshire, but his spirit rose on the emergency, and he boldly determined to plunge into the very heart of the enemy's country. He hurried to the beautiful vale of Llangollen, and having slaked his thirst in the rapid Dee, he bade a long, a last farewell to those hills, to that country, which had for forty long years been the mistress, the idol of his soul.

Seated on the rocks of Llangollen, he viewed with stern melancholy the foaming cataract of this truly romantic glen. In by-gone years, in sight of this very flood, the boasted power of England had been overthrown ; here he first had vowed his life to liberty and his country's cause ; and now, on this self-same spot, he for ever resigned those hopes, those aspirations, which had formed the polar star of his whole existence !

“ Griffiths,” said Glendower, as the old

harper, with his head sunk on his bosom in deep meditation listened to the bubbling flood, "strike but once more the harp, as formerly in the halls of my ancestors: let for the last time, the ear of your chieftain listen to the anthem of his house; once more let his soul feel, that still he has a country, still he is its prince; and then, proud heart, be for ever still!"

Griffiths raised his harp: those strains which oft had been heard in the field of battle, now poured forth on the breeze, and mingled its tones with the raging cataract: the soul of the warrior rose: his aged eye brightened; he grasped his blade,—there stood confessed, the gallant chieftain, the illustrious Glendower, the patriot of Wales!

Suddenly the harper's note was changed; the solemn dirge of death seems to tell, that the warriors have disappeared from the scene; the wail of women, the grief of thousands, is heard in his soul-stirring strains. Again the note was changed, the voice of the harper, blending with the tones of his instrument,

swells the air with a farewell,—a last, a long farewell to Wales!

Glendower placed his hand on his brow, as the harper concluded his strain; one scalding tear of agony bedewed the hero's cheek; then drawing the blade which had been devoted to his country, and only wielded in her cause, he cast it into the raging torrent which rolled beneath his feet. One hurried prayer on his bended knee, was uttered for his country's weal; then dashing from the cliff, he crossed the stream. Glendower for the last time had pressed the soil of his beloved native land!

Oh, patriotism! word too much abused! under the shadow of thy name, what crimes have not been committed, what torrents of blood have not been spilt! where shall we point the finger, and say, in such a bosom is enshrined thy glorious image?—for glorious thou art; most glorious, when thou hast in truth placed thy impress on the human heart,—a halo surrounds thy loved one's head; his brow is bound with laurel, his eye, fired by

ambition worthy of a god ; his feelings ennobled, his desires elevated, his thoughts exalted : he is crowned with glory ; fame breathes but his name, virtue smiles upon his deeds, and religion glories in his enthusiasm ! Shall we look to the deeds of the Roman Brutus, and say,—there stands the patriot ? No ! for he cared not to plunge his country in blood and destruction, to gratify his own inordinate ambition, that he forsooth, might be termed “the patriot Brutus.” Shall we look to our own times for a patriot ?—think of the miscalled patriots of the present day,—does ambition, or the love of country, rule their actions ?

The declaimer calls himself a patriot, he rants against everything, and everybody, save himself, talks about a nation’s liberties. “Oh ! the good, the noble Englishman,” says that clear sighted animal, “John Bull,” such a man as this should rule our destinies ; but they seem to forget that a man may rant and talk of liberty and virtue, and still be the greatest enemy of both.

My countrymen, let character be of more account in your minds; believe not him, whose general integrity bears not testimony to his truth: think more of the character of such men as may propose themselves, either as members of your sovereigns counsels, or of your parliament; should a time of trouble arrive, 'twill never be the declaiming, nominal patriot, who would fly to your succour, but the man whose character for integrity, rendered him the uncompromising friend of his country.

Did the talent of the Girondists save their country?—No, they wanted character. France perished, because she gave heed to ambitious declamation, not to character.

But to our theme, from which we pray our reader forgiveness for having wandered.

May we rank Owen Glendower as a patriot? history, I fear, does not thus deal with his memory; they have deemed his conduct, rebellion against his lawful sovereign; yet 'tis certain, that he first took up arms to maintain the rights of Richard the Second; nor do we

understand how he could be termed rebel, for refusing to transfer his allegiance to a usurping dynasty. If Glendower was a rebel, then the glorious struggle of La Vendee was rebellion, and La Roche Jaquelin, and La Charrette, were traitors to their country.

When Henry the Fifth returned from his first campaign in France, an inquiry was set on foot as to the place of Glendower's retirement, as the monarch was anxious that there should be none throughout his dominions who might not on this occasion share the general reconciliation and forgiveness of political offences.

From the day that Owen Glendower had crossed the sea at Llangollen nothing could be discovered concerning his fate: and it was for some time imagined that death in some obscure hamlet had terminated his earthly career.

Descriptions, however, of the Welch Prince were dispersed through different counties, and an old priest at the village of Mornington, in Herefordshire, gave the following account:—

“That about a month after Henry’s embarkation for France, two old men in the garb of pilgrims solicited admittance into the convent of St. Francis at Mornington; one was blind, and evidently treated the other with the greatest respect. No one ever saw either smile; they conversed with none; and it was evident some hidden grief was fast wearing away their lives. Three months sufficed to see the elder carried to his grave; the other quickly followed, but before his death confessed that he who before had died was the far-famed Owen Glendower.”

In one grave lies interred the faithful follower and his loved master; one tomb encloses the remains of the energetic bard of Welch song and the illustrious assertor of the liberties of Wales!

CHAPTER XIII.

How yet resolves the governor of the town ?
This is the latest parley we will admit ;
Therefore, to our best mercy give yourselves ;
Or like to men proud of destruction,
Defy us to our worst.

SHAKSPERE.

HENRY having made all the necessary provision for the well being of the kingdom during his absence, and everything being prepared, on the eleventh of August, with a favourable wind the fleet got under weigh. The whole armament amounted to about thirteen hundred vessels. The shore was lined with spectators, and perhaps never fleet left England with the more hearty and entire concurrence

of its people. Hardly had they set sail before, from want of due precaution, the vessel which carried that same Baron de Beaumont whom Henry had so sharply rebuked on the day of the review at Southampton, caught fire. The mariners, who so lately had been pressed into the service, hastily deserted *Le Roodecoge*,—for so was the vessel called. She speedily drifted towards the other vessels of the fleet, and had it not been for the extraordinary exertions of Sir Gerard Ufflett, from the *CXI Caraches*, and of the Earl of March, who at the hazard of his life fixed a cable to her bows and towed her to leeward of the fleet, great would have been the destruction; luckily, only five vessels and but few lives were lost.

Once more the king sternly rebuked the baron, who, taking offence, with ten vessels of his own returned to England. When, however, some time after he heard of the distresses and difficulties of the English army before *Harfleur*, he set sail with a large convoy of provisions, and, craving forgiveness of Henry,

was ever after seen the foremost wherever the danger was most imminent.

On the thirteenth the king landed about three miles from Harfleur, at a place called Kidecans, having previously issued his commands that no one should land before him on pain of death ; but whether it was from fear of irregularity in the disembarkation, and dreading that his troops might on landing be induced to commit some excess by plundering the neighbouring hamlets, or whether from a craving for danger and glory, does not appear.

The first order he issued after his troops had disembarked, was to the effect that they must consider the country in which they were as the property of the English, that no useless devastation or damage was to be done ; that the persons of women and priests were to be sacred ; that no sanctuary was to be violated ; and that the clerical property and the holy articles belonging to the altar were to remain untouched. He then ordered a general review for the purpose of returning thanks to Al-

mighty God for their safe arrival, and to pray that their just cause might prosper.

A summons was immediately sent to Sir Lionel de Braquemont, the Governor of Harfleur, to surrender the town into the hands of the troops of his lawful sovereign, which was indignantly rejected; and five days after the siege commenced.

The art of besieging fortified places in those days was but little advanced from what it was in the time of the Norman conquerors. Artillery had arrived at so small a state of perfection that the veteran warrior looked on it with contempt, although those of the new school saw evidently that it was doomed to supersede the ponderous machinery used for battering walls in the times of their fathers, and which had not as yet given way to the modern invention. The Duke of Clarence was appointed by Henry to superintend their first advances towards the place. It was, however, but a nominal post; as to everything, even to the smallest

minutiæ, did the King of England turn his attention.

The morning after the troops had landed, the Earl of March and Sir Ingram de Umfraville, who had joined the king on the eve of his embarkation at Southampton, and who was anxious to wipe off the momentary stain on his character, was, through the generosity of Henry, placed in an immediate position of danger, and consequently where honour might be gained,—being sent to reconnoitre the defences of the town. The king then took up his position on a hill, awaiting the report of March. The approach to Harfleur was found to be most difficult, owing to the whole valley between the hill on which Henry had encamped and the town being intersected by ditches filled from the Seine; moreover, at the only side of the town which was at all accessible was a gate, before which the enemy had erected a barbican,—a defence rather of the nature of the stockade of the present day, to wit, timbers or

branches were strongly tied together, supported in the interior to the height of about twenty feet by mounds of earth. The timbers were loopholed for the purposes of external annoyance; a ditch also surrounded this defence.

The harbour was unapproachable; three sets of towers defended the entrance, which was extremely narrow, whilst a sort of bar of thick stakes had been laid by the enemy, above which the tide flowed; but even then so shallow was the water that nothing but the lightest vessels could pass over it.

At length the whole extent of Harfleur was beleagured, and Henry by degrees approached. He first fixed his battering engines near the barbican, having contrived to cover them from the enemy by erecting before each a sort of moveable building of thick planks fitted with iron, which was only drawn up when the clumsy engine beneath was prepared to send forth its stone ball, either by ignited powder or by the force of machinery. The troops conti-

nually throwing up earth approached nearer and nearer to the walls. As fast, however, as the barbican and the other defences were ruined, tubs and faggots filled with earth replaced the damage done; and every street was fortified with some of these earthen barriers to prevent the annoyance caused by the rolling of the large stones cast into the town by the English.

Mining was now attempted by the king; but whilst in one mine the humidity of the soil created an insurmountable obstacle, in another the enemy discovering the work in progress, had formed countermines, and it became a tilt-yard for those who could not find sufficient amusement of that description above-ground. Henry was therefore forced to interdict this mode of warfare.

He now determined to hazard an assault on the barbican; for this purpose he prepared immense stores of faggots and bundles of straw, also trees, wooden bulwarks, and scaling ladders, each of the height of the walls. He

was here, however, again frustrated ; as on the walls were vessels filled with combustible compositions of sulphur and quicklime, hot earth, and oil, to cast on the heads and into the eyes of the English if they attempted an assault ; and as the ditch would have been filled with ignitable matter, the attempt must have ended in the discomfiture of the assailants ; nor was the strength of Henry's army sufficient to enable him to gain places at so great cost of life. The position of the English, now that they had approached so near the walls, was replete with danger, as the divisions of the army were separated from one another by dikes only passable by boats, and in case of sudden sallies from the garrison, one division might be cut off before another could come to its assistance ; various bridges were therefore constructed, and the evil was thus partially remedied.

After twenty days' siege the besiegers found that they gained but little apparent advantage ; and, in addition, dysentery in its most violent form was daily thinning Henry's ranks. No

care, no precaution seemed to have any influence in averting this fearful malady; and unless the besieged could be brought to terms, it threatened to annihilate the whole force.

During this state of affairs, one night a flag of truce was reported to Henry to be at the outposts. He to whom the siege promised no glory, and who saw that army melting away which he had fondly hoped to have led to the very gates of Paris, gladly received the tidings, and ordered the bearer of the flag of truce to be brought into his presence.

A knight of commanding stature, with a mantle thrown over his armour, and his visor down, was ushered in.

“We are right glad, sir knight,” said the king, “to see that our lawful subjects of Harfleur are at length sensible of their want of wisdom in having thus arrayed against them the power of England. We would fain know your errand, and speedily; as we do you the credit of saying, that Henry of England is granted but little repose by your townsfolk,

and has, therefore, but little time to waste in parley."

"The conference I would claim," returned the stranger, "must be with your majesty alone."

"You are bold, sir knight; but if you can say that your errand has for its object the termination of this bloody siege, we will e'en grant your desire; but first raise your visor, that our trusty brother here of Clarence and our other friends may know the warrior with whom their king is about to treat."

"It cannot be," replied the stranger. "The surrender of the town of Harfleur is my object. If the conference on my own terms be granted, 'tis well for you, most noble king! if not, I trust to the well-known good faith of the King of England for my safe return."

"My liege," interposed the Duke of Clarence, "in the name of your majesty's most faithful subjects, I submit the request that this stranger may be searched, and that no private interview be granted; although knightly he

his garb, how know we that treachery lurks not beneath the closed visor? How know we this stranger's intentions? but we all know, and the men of Harfleur well know what to us is the life of our monarch."

"Most prudent and most trusty Clarence," replied the king, "in this we must exercise our prerogative, for surely our good subjects do not fear to trust their king to his own defence against one single arm; but were it otherwise, it becometh not Henry of Monmouth to show suspicion." Then, turning to the stranger, "You have your wish, sir knight; you, Clarence, and our other friends may withdraw, and see that no one is within ear-shot."

The nobles turned to depart, as they well knew that Henry would listen to no counsel on a point in which he fancied a possibility of a taint might attach to his chivalrous character.

Being left alone with the king, the stranger resumed:—"I pray your majesty's promise, that the subject of this conference shall be secret—that it never passeth your majesty."

"Again your wish is granted," replied the king; "and now, sir knight, delay not longer, but raise your visor, and declare your terms."

When the stranger had raised the visor, the king hastily exclaimed, "Hah! the Baron de Gaucort! By the mass, thou art the man of all others I would have seen; and now—the terms."

"The men of Harfleur offer none," replied De Gaucort; "'tis I that offer Harfleur to your majesty; but in recompence I demand an English earldom and five thousand marks."

The king quickly rejoined, "And thou hast authority to treat?"

"None, sir king; 'tis Jaques de Gaucort alone that treats, for he hates the proud Sir Lionel de Braquemont. For this cause he offers Harfleur to your majesty."

"Baron de Gaucort," replied Henry, his countenance showing the struggle that was within him to restrain his wrath, "thou art reputed a noble knight, and great is our discontent to find our enemy not worthy of our arms."

An earldom, sayest thou?" (whilst a sneer overspread his fine features), "and of England too? thou little knowest the risk thou mightest have run. Was not our royal word pledged for your safety, this moment should you be sent back to Harfleur, and given up to the just resentment of your fellow citizens. Baron De Gaucort, return to your much-injured countrymen, and attempt by deeds of honour, in the service of your country, to banish from your conscience this night's business. Your secret is safe, as our royal word is pledged; but know, that hadst thou the keys of Paris in thine hand, and destruction, without the capture of Paris, stared the King of England in the face, Henry of Monmouth would reject them with scorn, as he does now those of Harfleur, when presented by the hands of a traitor to his country. And now, away, for every moment in your presence we feel as a pollution." And as De Gaucort attempted to speak,—"Away, I say, speak not, but away."

"Proud king," rejoined the knight, "I go, but thou shalt rue this night."

The king having summoned the lords who were in attendance, continued, "My lord of Ferris, conduct this knight to our outpost, and see that no one molest or question him."

Some time after this interview, a council of war was held in Harfleur; of the citizens, many wished to surrender, but De Gaucort pretended to spurn the idea. "What need, my friends," said he, "of this haste, are not our battlements yet strong, have we not yet both corn and wine, and what privations have we, to which our enemies are not equally subject." De Braquemont, although he deeply sympathized with the miseries the citizens were forced to endure, would not allow the thoughts of capitulation to enter into his mind. He however, disdained the artifice by which De Gaucort had attempted to mislead the citizens, and told them the true state of their remaining resources, which indeed was deplorable; but still he gave them strong assurances of his belief, that their master, the King of France, would shortly arrive, and force the English to raise the siege. On issuing from the council,

De Gaucort let drop some words in the presence of one of the principal burghers of the place, which induced them to think that the governor was not acting honestly by them, and a domestic of De Gaucort's, but not known as such in the town of Harfleur, by name Delamotte, insinuated that the governor was the sole cause of their misery, and that he himself was enjoying the utmost luxury, whilst his fellow-citizens were reduced to the lowest possible quantity of food which could sustain life. This sunk deep into the minds of some of the disaffected; but still the party was not sufficiently strong to openly attack De Braquemont, and the plot for his destruction, which De Gaucort evidently aimed at, so that he himself might be placed in command, entirely failed. As, however, De Gaucort appeared not in it himself, and as he utterly disclaimed the interpretation which the burgher had placed on the words he had dropped, he was still esteemed one of De Braquemont's chief supporters. Shortly after

the council had closed, it was agreed between De Braquemont and De Gaucort, that the following night a sally should be made, and an attempt to reach the quarter of the King of England.

The tent of Henry, placed on a small mound about a mile from the walls of Harfleur, was too conspicuous not to be well known to the besieged; a small rivulet ran near it. On the other side of this rivulet was a wood, on the borders of which the Welchmen, under David Gamme, and Llewellen ap Dwyll, were encamped; but the wood itself was not occupied, as Henry was fearful of the destruction which would have been committed on the timber; this he required both for fuel and for the machinery of the engine employed for battering the walls. The Welch had charge of this wood. Many who had followed Gamme to the wars, had already repented the step they had taken, and being before lukewarm, starvation and dysentery combined to turn lukewarmness into positive disgust; some few

of these had, therefore, deserted, and entered into the service of the garrison; these, (as deserters generally are), were men of abandoned characters, and fit for any villainy that might be proposed to them, and for which they would be well paid.

It was settled between De Braquemont and De Gaucort, that the former having the Welchmen as his guides, should lead about two hundred picked men to the outskirts of the wood, that the Welchmen in advance, should parley with the sentries of their own country, who would be at the outskirts, and should strike them down, whilst parleying. If this could be done without noise, the party were to enter the wood, and to lie concealed, until the tumult of a fight should be heard in the rear, on the other side of the stream; this would be a sign that De Gaucort had attacked the posts near King Henry's tent. Henry, as was his wont, they well knew would rush to where the conflict raged; De Braquemont was then to cross the stream, and cut off

Henry's retreat. The principal of the Welch guides had, bribed by De Gaucort, persuaded De Braquemont of the certainty of success.

From infancy, Sir Lionel de Braquemont, and the Baron de Gaucort, had been inseparable; the former, the frank warrior of the fifteenth century, and inspired with all the exaggerated, though noble spirit of chivalry, of that period. The latter, most gallant in the field, with a countenance of surprising beauty; a mind richly cultivated, and a manner refined by a sojourn in Italy of two years, where he had been sent by his father. Their characters also were widely different: openness and candour distinguished every movement of the former, whilst a vein of deceit ran through each act of De Gaucort. De Braquemont was however deceived, and believed that every virtue existed in the bosom of his friend.

About two years previous to this siege, the beautiful Adèle de Blois had given her hand to Sir Lionel de Braquemont. De Gaucort, who had loved, and endeavoured by every secret means to prevent her marriage with

his friend, had been himself rejected with scorn by Adèle; who, with more clear sightedness than her rough husband, had seen with facility the worthlessness of the man. She knew, that when suing for her hand, her large dowry was in reality his aim. From that moment, he inwardly swore to be revenged, both on De Braquemont, and the proud beauty, who had dared to slight the pretensions of one who ever before, in affairs of gallantry, had met with unlimited success. He dissembled, however, and by degrees wormed himself more and more into the thorough confidence and regard of the unsuspecting De Braquemont. When the king despatched the latter, as the most trustworthy of his knights, to defend Harfleur, saying, that he confided the honour of France to his keeping, Sir Lionel instantly had solicited that his friend, the Baron de Gaucourt might be permitted to accompany him. Thus by the favour of his friend, had De Gaucourt now become the second in command at Harfleur.

CHAPTER XIV

The men and women they soon were dead,
The sailors their strength did urge,
But the billows that beat, were their winding-sheet,
And the winds sung their funeral dirge.

H. K. WHITE.

THE season in which Constance embarked, was one, which on the British coast, is seldom that of storm; and with a cloudless sky, and unruffled sea, she left those shores which were endeared to her by the recollections of childhood, by her strong attachment for her grandfather, and as the land over which hovered the spirits of her departed parents.

Short was this period of calm; on the third day, the clouds of night fell thickly o'er the

face of the waters: the winds rudely stirred up the deep, the heavens frowned, and the sea-gull screeching round the slender bark, gave token of approaching storm. Wave succeeded wave, in rapid succession, and as the vessel was hurried along by the flood, each, mountain-like, seemed to overtop her decks, and as they proudly came rolling on, destruction appeared inevitable; whilst the spray, driven along the face of the waters, appeared like snow drifting o'er a surface already hidden by that element. The rain fell in torrents, and the lightning alone served to illumine the scene. Borne along by the force of the gale, the mariners in vain attempted to keep the vessel's head from the shore, which rendered visible by the lightning's flash, rose close on their leeward bow. All now appeared confusion and dismay: some falling on their knees, invoked the Virgin, and every saint in the calendar; whilst others, raved and tore their hair, in the agony of despair. The spirit of Constance seemed to rise with the occasion,

and in this awful moment, when death, clothed with every terror, appeared inevitable, she attempted to calm the ravings of those, who, with blasphemous words, seemed to defy the destiny they feared, and curse the God they neglected. In one, her exhortation seemed to revive a better spirit; gained by her noble bearing, shame did that, which should have been excited by a far worthier cause; he fell on his knees by her side, and prayed forgiveness for those very words which, but one moment before had issued from his lips. A group of those most deeply sensible of the awfulness of their situation, on their knees listened to her, she earnestly prayed for them, and for herself; and notwithstanding the fearful roar of the ocean, her voice, clear and distinct, was heard through the storm. Fearlessly she looked forward to that death, which to her bore no terrors, and those whose intellects had yet withstood the horrors of the night, inspired by her holy example, invoked that God before whom they were so shortly to appear.

But, had the mind of Constance no pang at parting with this world and its enjoyments? Yes, one spot there was, one bright spot, which called her back to earth; one long, protracted sigh told the pain she felt in quitting it for ever; there was an inward feeling which taught her that love and happiness had awaited her on earth; there was one being whose image seldom left her breast, whose parting words still rung in her ear, and to hear but once more whose voice, were it but for one fleeting minute, in this hour of death, would have been happiness too great for utterance. Oh! she could then, she thought, have died content. She knelt, and inwardly supplicated for heaven's mercy, for the zealous patriot, the gallant soldier, the devoted lover,—and heaven smiled upon the prayer of faith and innocence. The fate of the unhappy crew was now decided; a still brighter flash of lightning illumined the scene; the bark still braving the storm, rose on a mountainous wave, which carrying her on its bosom, dashed against the cliff.—As the sea retired, it left the

vessel on the rocks, but each succeeding wave as it drove her higher, hastened her destruction. Masts, bulwarks, all had been torn away, and the greater part of the sailors washed from her decks, and engulphed in the ocean, either perished in the deep, or being dashed on shore, their mangled corpses were afterwards found by the wreckers of the coast. Constance had miraculously been still preserved, when suddenly a loud shout on the approach on the shore of a body of people with torches, gave token of a hope of rescue. The storm was abating, and although each wave still committed some ravage, the tide had receded, and hope in those who were as yet spared, began to revive. Salisbury, who by good fortune, had also escaped, now got close to Constance, and contrived to fasten her to one of the fallen spars, she was therefore safe, provided the storm did not rage with renewed violence. Those on shore now desired to pass a rope to the vessel, but no one was sufficiently hazardous to make the at-

tempt.. Salisbury saw the strength of Constance was fast failing, and that unless aid was soon obtained, the worst might be dreaded. Not being able to swim himself, he desired by heavy bribes, to persuade one of the survivors to attempt to carry a rope on shore; but what was the hope of future reward to any?—he spoke to the winds! At this moment, a wave dashed o'er the very spot upon which he stood, and carrying off the spar to which Constance was tied, both were cast into the bosom of the deep; unluckily, Salisbury lost his hold, and his destruction appeared inevitable. The place on which the vessel had struck, was a resort for the fishermen of part of the coast, near Boulogne, and posts were there erected, to which they attached their nets. Salisbury was dashed against one of these posts, and managed, by great exertion, to reach the top; for a time, therefore, he was safe. The spar to which Constance was tied, was cast on shore, and after a few minutes, she was sufficiently recovered to understand that she was

in the power of a set of men, whose uncouth manners, and warlike carriage, gave evidence of the irregular soldiery of that century. They had already despoiled her of the few trifling ornaments of gold which were about her person, when a cavalier whose harsh repulsive features, but licentious eye, marked the lawlessness of his life, stepped to the spot, where the soldiers had conveyed their prisoner, and harshly rebuking them, ordered an immediate restitution of those articles of which Constance had been despoiled; then bowing respectfully, placed her in charge of one of the soldiers, and proceeded to the spot where his men were in vain endeavouring to save the vessel.

The storm still raged, and from the time that Constance had quitted the bark,—as if she had been its guardian angel,—the elements seemed to gather fresh fury. The unhappy vessel had unfortunately, by the strength of the waves, been once more set afloat, and it

was evident, dashed as she was by each succeeding sea against the shore, that her fate was sealed. At length her side was entirely stove in, and filling speedily, she gradually settled to the water's edge. One moment's suspense, one wave more rolled on, and the bubbling water alone told the tale,—the destroying element had done its worst! But through the murky veil of night, from time to time a voice was plaintively heard,—one piteous cry broke through the momentary hushings of the storm; and as the morning dawned, and the tide washed in, an individual was seen seated on the fisherman's post; but the elements still raged, and each movement of the flowing tide, which now had risen to his breast, showed but too clearly, that naught could avert his destiny. With agony did Salisbury invoke the aid of his fellow-men on shore.—Vain were his cries!—vain his hopes! the tide still rose; protracted was his misery, though no less sure his doom; and now his

strength had failed, his grasp released its hold ; the voracious deep received its victim ; his soul was wafted to eternity !*

Constance beheld the faithful Salisbury sink into the devouring element, which had already engulfed all that crew, which but a few short hours before, replete with health and life, and full of hope, had left their country's shores.

Every hope of plunder over, the chief, who during the last fearful moments of the catastrophe had gazed in awe-struck wonder at the power of the storm, now turned towards the spot where Constance reclined. The morning's light disclosed to her, that he of the repulsive brow, was chieftain of the band by whom she was surrounded ; collecting her scattered senses, she demanded protection from him, in the name of the majesty of

* The death which Salisbury is here supposed to die, did, in fact, some years ago occur to a fisherman at Boulogne in the manner described.

France, and of Katherine of Valois, to whose court she desired to be conducted.

Amercot Marcell, one of the most famous chiefs of those free companies which then existed in the French territory, was the leader to whom she addressed herself.

A struggle seemed to exist in his mind, between the hopes of reward, held out by the Lady Constance, and the possession of a toy so beautiful, as he had already discovered his prisoner to be; but luckily for Constance, the d'Armagnac party had at this period need of troops, to counterbalance the influence of the Duke of Burgundy at the court of France; and the Prince de Beauvilliers was then present with the band of Amercot, in treaty for his services, on the part of the Count d'Armagnac.

The ambassador instantly saw the advantage that might be gained for his master, if he rescued from probable dishonour a friend of the princess. Katherine of Valois was then all powerful at court, carrying with her, by

her energy of character, and her known abhorrence for dishonourable deeds, all that still of noble and respectable remained, in that sink of iniquity. Her father doated on her, and her preponderance, if she chose to throw it into either scale, would easily render the party she smiled upon victorious; but as yet, she had wisely kept aloof, and each side had vainly endeavoured to turn her to their purpose.

The young Prince de Beauvilliers made it therefore one of the stipulations of the Armagnac treaty, with Amercot Marcell, that Constance should be permitted to proceed with him to Paris. The contracting parties soon settled on the terms, and the following day beheld the whole body en route for the capital.

CHAPTER XV.

He hath out-villained villany so far, that the rarity redeems him.

SHAKESPEARE.

On the night appointed for the sally, the following conversation was held between De Gaucort and his servant Delamotte:—

“The night favours our enterprise, Delamotte; ’tis dark as Erebus. Have you secured your men?”

“I have,” replied the person thus addressed; “every precaution has been taken that may ensure success. They have sworn to obey my orders. I have given them gold, and have promised them ten times told a like reward. For half the sum the villains would murder

their own fathers. I have seen to their weapons. Failure is impossible."

"Thanks, good Delamotte; you shall not want for reward: but, harkye, trust not to them entirely—make it sure yourself: for even should you fail, fear not; I will see to your safety. In all cases hold your peace. Whatever may happen, in whatever strait you may be plunged, I will find means to extricate you."

"Twice has De Braquemont escaped me," resumed Delamotte: "once when that lubberly Gascon saved him from the waters of the Rhone, and again the night of the marriage."

"Talk not of that marriage, Delamotte, if you would wish me to retain my senses. The very thought that he, the rude De Braquemont, the man I hate above all the world besides,—that he, such a clod of earth as that, should have dared to stand in the way of the affections of the Baron de Gaucourt, 'tis more than I can bear. Delamotte—as you love yourself, make sure of the blow."

“ Fear not, my lord ; let the Welch rascals but be true (and I doubt them not), then all is safe ; but I will once more see Ap Gwynn, as although he is not a man generally to falter, I see he likes not the job ; so the wine cup and promises must be freely plied.”—Saying this he retired, and soon found himself at the spot where he had left the above-mentioned individual.

Perhaps a more perfect picture of one fit to lead either a band of freebooters or gentlemen of the road, as the highwayman was then termed, could not have been found. A face, in which it was doubtful whether ugliness, cunning, or ferocity predominated ; a complexion rather darker than that of his countrymen in general ; and shaggy hair hanging over his shoulders as thickly tangled as the mane of some wild beast ; his body enveloped in the chain-armour of the preceding century ; his height gigantic. Lying stretched on the ground were four or five of his companions, or rather dependants, as, notwithstanding his un-

youth appearance, Radnorshire had often in the days of Glendower made boast of him both for his power and personal prowess.

“ You’ve come then at last, have you, Delamotte ?” growled the savage ; “ and where’s the purse ? for you know without that Ap Gwynn stirs not from hence.”

“ Gently and softly, friend Gwynn,” replied Delamotte ; “ let us understand our bargain.— But who have we here ?” looking round at the sleepers : “ can we depend on them ?”

“ Ay, as I would on you,” replied Ap Gwynn, “ could you make a stiver by betraying me.” Then turning to the half-dressed savages—“ Up, swine, I say, and away ”

Starting up, the place was quickly cleared ; as they well knew that Ap Gwynn seldom gave his orders twice without accompanying it by a blow from his dagger’s point. When they had departed, Ap Gwynn turning towards Delamotte fiercely said, “ Now, sir esquire, we are alone ; say what you wish clearly and distinctly (as this morning I understood you

not), and I will tell you in the same spirit what Ap Gwynn requires in return."

Delamotte, although quite as great a rascal as Ap Gwynn, had not his cool determined manner, nor had he the bluster or bravado of the other; but at length assuming a portion of Ap Gwynn's manner, he said, "First, I require that a trustworthy man be despatched to Llewellyn and that he may be made aware of the plan for the night's sally, so that the party in the wood may be secured. Secondly, I should desire that, as it will be perfectly dark, some strong hand be selected to rid the world of the leader of this party, our worthy governor, Sir Lionel de Braquemont. Any of your honest sleepers whom we have just dismissed, as they of course know well the wood, can easily escape on striking the blow; or, if this does not suit you, you may make terms with the enemy for the whole job."

"Hum!" ejaculated Ap Gwynn; "you have indeed spoken plainly, and to the point: and I will answer as clearly,—First, then, a

trustworthy man is not be found in my band ; but ten marks will make one. For the rest, I conceive that ten more will make the surprise certain. As to the last, I believe, for old acquaintance-sake, Delamotte, I must undertake the task myself ; and as it is not meet that an Ap Gwynn should work on the hire of a petty vassal, fifty marks will alone make sure of the governor ; perhaps an odd twenty may be required wherewith to bribe any rogue who by accident might see the deed. It cannot be done cheaper than ninety marks ; and, by-the-bye, I had nearly forgotten one item : to wit, a poisoned dagger, which is to give the blow ; this will add ten marks more, as suspicion might arise should his death not be instantaneous ”

“ Well, well, agreed ; ’tis a bargain,” replied Delamotte. “ The sum to be paid when De Braquemont is no more.”

“ Nay, friend Delamotte,” answered the other : “ one-half paid this night, the other when the task is executed.”

“ Ha, ha, Ap Gwynn ! think you I am such a fool as to trust you, when you would hardly trust yourself ? ”

“ I am certain that you are,” drily replied the other ; then throwing his legs on the table, and crossing his arms, looked jeeringly at Delamotte.

“ Why, by my faith,” replied Delamotte, “ your impudence almost equals that arch-rebel’s, Owen Glendower, your former master, who the devil, I trust, ere this has taken into his holy keeping. Why, there are half-a-dozen men, as good as you, who would do the job for half the sum.”

“ Then why come troubling me,” replied Ap Gwynn, “ when so many are to be found ? I want not the job. It will be quite as easy for me to be honest, and get paid for honesty instead ; although, I confess, I have tender feelings, and should not like to see poor master Delamotte’s carcase swinging in the wind.”

“ What mean you now, Ap Gwynn ? ” replied Delamotte, who did not quite appear to like the idea.

“ Why, I mean,” said Ap Gwynn doggedly, “ that either within one hour half the sum talked of in our contract is placed in my hands, or I will so speak to the governor that both you and that precious limb of Satan, that master of your’s, may have the benefit of immediate elevation by the cord.”

“ You jest, good master Ap Gwynn.”

“ I jest not, very good master Delamotte ;” and then changing his bantering manner to one of austere resolve, he continued, “ Lookye, I have now wasted with you one precious hour,—dost see the glass? (taking up at the same time an hour-glass and turning it over). In one short hour the sand thou seest will have fallen to the bottom; as the last grain falls (if by that time the sum be not counted down upon this board), I haste to the governor;—but you look pale; here, cheer up, man; here’s a glass of sack for thee: and let us drink to a pleasant termination to this affair.”

Delamotte tossed off the glass, and looking hard at Ap Gwynn said, “ Wilt thou swear by all that is sacred, by the relics in the church

of the Holy Mother of God, by all the saints in heaven, and by your sword, to do as I have proposed if you get the sum in question?"

"I will," replied Ap Gwynn; "and by every unborn virgin and saint to boot."

"'Tis agreed, then, Ap Gwynn; there is my hand on't. I will return within the appointed time."

Delamotte having returned to his master, told him the issue of his meeting with Ap Gwynn.

"What matter," hastily exclaimed De Gaucourt, "were it five times the sum? Is not Adèle de Blois mine when De Braquemont is swept from my path? and her broad lands of Rosseville and Saint Croix will not begrudge a sum so worthily spent. Procure from my almoner the sum required, and return instantly to Ap Gwynn."

In the camp of the English the morning after this compact had been adjusted, Henry was watching by the bed of his sick friend Courtney, Bishop of Norwich, who had been

ttacked by the terrible malady which was then laying low the stoutest of the English host; he was one from whom in all cases of difficulty and danger Henry was wont to seek advice, and perhaps the esteem in which he was held by his monarch was amply merited, both on account of his talents and devotion to the cause, as well as for the love he bore towards his royal master. The disease had now taken a fatal turn, and it was evident to all that life must shortly desert his attenuated frame.

Henry at this moment was informed that Lewellen Ap Dwyll required instantly to see him; and from him he gained information regarding the sally, which had just been acquired from an agent of Ap Gwynn's. When Henry re-entered, Courtney, faintly smiling, enquired the cause of the summons; and Henry having in a few words recounted to him what had passed, the old man, even now on the point of death gave his advice on the matter he had just heard. The attendants now

solicited Henry to take some rest, as for thirty hours he had never ceased either watching by the bedside of his friend or in visiting the different posts of his army, and in giving the orders that were required.

Henry, however, saw that his friend had but a very short time to live, and he was unwilling that any hand but his should soothe his dying moments. The last offices of religion were then administered to him by Henry's own chaplain. When finished, a calm placidity overspread the features of the dying man, whilst the last flicker of the taper gave him momentary strength. He raised himself, and taking the hand of Henry, "My son," said he, "I feel now that my life is well nigh spent, the mirror of futurity already opens to my view: Henry of England, persevere in this thy just cause, I see the crown of France encircling thy brows. Let not disease or death turn thy steps. Afflicted France requires a termination to her woes, and thou only hast the power." He sunk back exhausted, but retained the

hand of Henry still in his feeble grasp. Again the eye unclosed, but the voice was less clear : "Farewell, my son,—my dear master ; may God reward you for your kindness to the poor old man. My friends, my dear countrymen, farewell !" He then attempted to make the sign of the cross upon his forehead, but the hand fell ; he sunk back on his pillow—the spirit had fled.

Deeply did Courtney's last words impress themselves on the mind of Henry ; and who is there could blame the chivalrous monarch's eventual perseverance in gaining an end, in itself unjust, when we take into consideration the times in which he lived ; when we reflect that he originally entered into this troubled scene of strife by the advice of the highest of the churchmen of England ; and when so singularly blind were all, even of the very best, of the manifest injustice of the cause, that even the pious Courtney on his death-bed exhorts his friend, his pupil, his king, to persevere, in spite of all the miseries that this contest had already heaped on a section of the human race.

CHAPTER XVI.

With men i' the dark! Where be these bloody thieves?
How silent is this town! Ho! murder, murder!

SHAKSPEARE.

THE following night a small body called the archers of Rouen, armed only with swords and shields, and without any defensive armour, sallied forth from Harfleur, and creeping stealthily along reached the outskirts of the wood. Here, owing to the treacherous information given by Ap Gwynn's agent to the English, the sentinels were removed, and no apparent obstruction remained for their further advance. The plotters had, however, here outwitted themselves, as De Braquemont, who full well knew the general vigilance of Henry's

camp, immediately suspected that his plan had been betrayed, and determined at any rate not to advance farther into the wood than where he then was, and there to await the result; as even now he was sufficiently advanced to cut off Henry's retreat should he move towards that body who were to issue from the town at the other side of the rivulet; whilst on the other hand as yet he had not plunged sufficiently deep into the wood to allow his being easily intercepted.

Ap Gwynn urged him to proceed, and since there was no apparent reason for a deserter's great zeal for the cause, De Braquemont was persuaded that he had much to do with the treason. To be prepared for whatever might ensue, he directed the Welchmen to remain together, and desired his esquire, Rouvigné, to watch their motions, whilst he despatched six of his men in different directions to creep cautiously towards the different portions of the enemy's camp, and to bring speedy word of any movement. In a short time those whom

he had despatched to his flanks came hurrying in, saying that the enemy were advancing stealthily on each side, and that naught but instant retreat could prevent their being cut off. Another scout from the rear brought intelligence that a body of troops already occupied a small knoll between them and the town.

De Braquemont feeling now certain that all was discovered, hastily retreated. The darkness favoured him, and he arrived at the knoll, having just escaped being cut off by bodies who were now speedily closing on his rear. Still their danger would have been extreme had the officer been vigilant in charge of this post, but he little expected such a counter-march, and so sudden an attack. His ranks were consequently broken ; and taken entirely by surprise, the whole were routed. At this moment De Braquemont felt a blow of a dagger fall lightly on his shoulder, and glance off without doing him any injury. Rouvigné had seen the blow descending, and having in

part parried it, endeavoured to strike down the author of the attempted assassination, but in the confusion he escaped. It was evidently one of their own party, but the darkness prevented his features being recognized, and there was no time for further examination.

The road to Harfleur was now open for retreat, as the body of the enemy who occupied the knoll were entirely dispersed. The tramp of cavalry was however heard, and it was evident that armed only with their swords they were not able to withstand this attack. Separating therefore to the right and left, these light-armed warriors arrived speedily at the ditch of Harfleur, and as the road itself was occupied by the enemy's cavalry, they remained until morning hid in the ditches, and other places of security. Before day dawned the cavalry were forced to retreat; and De Braquemont and his men entered the city much harassed with the night's work, but having experienced little loss.

De Gaucort, who had assumed command

of the garrison, had much trouble in concealing the dissatisfaction he felt, when he heard of the reappearance of Sir Lionel, but feigning delight, he embraced cordially his unsuspecting friend, and told him, that to his great surprise, when, on the preceding night he had issued from the town, intending to attack the post agreed upon between them, his scouts brought him word that the enemy were drawn up, either to defend themselves against an expected sally, or to attack the walls. "Now my wishes," said he, "prompted me to forget my duty, as (in your absence) governor of the town; my heart bled at the sad alternative; but I full well knew, what your patriotic spirit would have prompted, had you been present, and in this spirit did I act; I permitted not, therefore, the body to proceed further as had been agreed upon, since their destruction would have been certain. Three messengers I then sent to recal you, but none have to this moment returned; I gave up all for lost, and when at daylight this

morning, I beheld you entering the gates, I could hardly credit my senses,—it was a moment of happiness, worth a century of the ordinary joys of life But, to your couch, my friend ; I will look to the safety of Harfleur.”

Bursting with rage, De Gaucort rushed to his own quarters, and Delamotte being summoned, when he entered, his master began, “How now, sirrah, are these your precious toils, out of which the governor could not extricate himself? Tell me, how didst thou dare to trust that to the hands of another, which I strictly enjoined you to execute? I knew before, that when you served me, ’twas not from affection or duty, but because your sordid soul loved the chink of the golden ore ; I had, however, still to learn that cowardice might be ranked amongst your attributes.”

Delamotte bit his lips at the reproach, but curbing his resentment, he answered in a supplicatory tone ; “’Twas no fault of your servant’s, my lord ; the plot was well laid, and I trusted the blow to a hand which before

never failed. How it happens that De Braquemont still lives, I know not,—save that fortune is as heretofore,—perverse.”

“Say rather,” rejoined his master, “that you desired not the fifty marks I promised, and that your poltroon spirit feared the arm of De Braquemont.”

Delamotte again repressing his wrath, at length said, “My lord, Ap Gwynn will require his guerdon.”

“A halter,” replied De Gaucort, “were a more fitting guerdon for such a miserable knave,—not a stiver shall touch his palm.”

“But, my lord, should he threaten to betray you.”

“He dare not,” answered De Gaucort, “no one would believe his tale, and a gibbet in the most public thoroughfare of Harfleur would reward the lie.”

Delamotte, although perhaps a more egregious scoundrel was not to be found throughout the wide realm of France, still had one tender point of feeling: this was, as regarded his

courage, and when De Gaucort taunted him with his want of that quality, he inwardly determined to be revenged, but to await his moment, until he could make good profit by betraying his master. This accounted for his anxiety regarding the possibility of Ap Gwynn having the start in the race of betrayal with him. At the same time, he dreaded the interview with Ap Gwynn; he was persuaded from his knowledge of the man, that notwithstanding the failure of his part of the agreement, he would still claim the reward promised for success, and that both he and his master were in his power. His mind was soon, however, made up, either to turn Ap Gwynn from his purpose, by fair means, or to be first in disclosing the plot. He now sought the quarter in which Ap Gwynn and his followers were domiciled. He found the huge ruffian seated at a table, covered with the remains of a debauch. Over the room, which was strewn with military accoutrements, and benches overthrown, a lamp, suspended

from the ceiling, threw a dim shade, which rendered more grim the countenance of the chief, who sat evidently half-intoxicated, and probably ready for any act of ferocity which might enter into his now half-witted brain.

"By my faith," cried Ap Gwynn, as Delamotte entered, "our prince of squires; he who provided us this fair repast. Come, pledge us, 'tis meet that you should have some share in your master's bounty. Fill the tankard of Ap Gwynn, comrade," continued he, speaking to one of the Welchmen, "and we'll see if this same squire is worthy of our right honest society." The tankard, which was honoured by the patronymic of the leader of the band, was of those dimensions, that Delamotte would willingly have escaped the draught, as he felt that it would require all his coolness to cope with Ap Gwynn in the coming conversation. He moreover, was desirous that the inebriety, which had already got possession of the ruffian, should not be increased: he therefore declined the

pledge, alleging that he was anxious to discuss matters of importance with Ap Gwynn, and that he had other affairs to arrange for his master, this night. But vain were the attempts of Delamotte. Ap Gwynn, whose orders were loudly backed by the remainder, insisted on his swallowing the whole contents of the Ap Gwynn tankard, the chief pledging him in a goblet of almost equal size. Delamotte, unaccustomed to potations of such a depth, soon felt that any conversation he desired with Ap Gwynn must be undertaken speedily, as his intellects were fast giving way to the strength and length of the draught. Summoning therefore, courage,—“Ap Gwynn,” said he, “let us to business, I have no time, whatever my inclination might prompt, for enjoying more of your hospitality.”

“Ay, true,” replied Ap Gwynn, who was ever quite alive when his interests were concerned, “you have come to pay the trifling balance. ’Tis well! your master knows how to keep, when he has once found, a useful

friend; and without vanity, I may say, his disceñment does him credit. Now out, ye knaves," addressing the remainder of the gang,—“to your guard-houses, I say, no more wassail to night. We may have more work prepared for us by this worthy man.” One of the band, more dilatory than the others, obeyed not instantly his orders, but deliberately filled the tankard before spoken of, and was putting it to his lips, when Ap Gwynn seizing a sort of club, with iron rings encircling it at its extremity, hurled it at him with an imprecation. It struck him on the forehead, the unfortunate man fell heavily blood gushing from his mouth and ears,—“Take him away, ye curs,” exclaimed the ruffian, “and see that he be not enlarged till it is my pleasure.” The men obeyed, as if nothing particular had happened, and that it were a matter of common occurrence. This slight insight of the determination of the man with whom he had to deal, evidenced by this occurrence, tended not much to compose the already

frightened Delamotte. The die, however, was cast;—he was as it were, in the den of thieves, and he felt that nothing but over-reaching his antagonist could extricate him.

When the hall was cleared, Ap Gwynn, throwing himself back in a large wooden-backed chair, on which he was seated, looked sternly at Delamotte, as if expecting a storm to arise from the communication, and that he had fully resolved on the course he intended to adopt.—Delamotte opened the conversation.

“A sorry business, comrade, you have made of this, and our master is sorely displeased with the conduct of this affair.”

“Our master!” suddenly exclaimed Ap Gwynn, “by the blessing of St. Winifred, I have no master, whilst this good sword can find me occupation: and if you mean in the paltry job just performed, ’twas done for my own pleasure, and because my knaves required some of the extra gold, which that worthy

master of yours holds, which they think ought to belong to honest men."

"Well, he begrudges you not, what you have got," replied Delamotte, "'twas a fair bargain, and he would as willingly have paid the remainder of the sum, had you performed your share of the agreement."

"Lookye, master Delamotte, I thought not that I should be obliged to borrow from your master the remainder of the sum, but dame Fortune has been playing me false, and by to-morrow, at noon, that braggart Gascon Collibert, will receive from my hands more than forty marks. This must be paid by your master:—I hate to use my power with harshness, so I will not claim it to-night, but to-morrow, by nine of the clock, it must be told down on this oaken board."

"What mean you?" replied Delamotte, "surely the terms of the contract specified the death of De Braquemont."

"True, most quibbling pettifogger!" replied Ap Gwynn, "but then I wanted not the coin, but honour now requires that the sum

should be paid: so to cut the matter short, the money must be forthcoming on this my board, I say."—Thus speaking, he thumped on the table with violence, as if to enforce his argument, or to show that not the smallest relaxation would be thought of.

"But how is't" resumed Delamotte, "that thou talkest of honour, and still dost act in contradiction of a sworn agreement?"

"Base paltry slave of a niggardly master!" replied Ap Gwynn, "you know not what honour means. The debt, which is incurred from the adverse cast of the die, is a debt which honour directs you to pay, and moreover is a debt, of which our holy mother church orders the payment. For what is the cast of the die, but the will and judgment of God!—he orders the payment, and I, therefore, in his name, make you responsible for the same: for I war not against the declared will of heaven." He crossed himself at the same time with mock gravity, and bowed his head in affected reverence.

"I fear me, Ap Gwynn," said Delamotte,

"that my master will not acknowledge this creed; at any rate to the extent you desire. Come, honest comrade, I know you do but joke, and therefore, I promise that my master shall make you free of five marks more, not as bound thereto, but in testimony of his good will towards you."

"Fifty marks," rejoined Ap Gwynn doggedly, "on this oaken table, at nine of the clock."

"But"—

"No buts," Ap Gwynn sternly interrupted him, "I wish for no more parley, it wants but little, sirrah, to induce me to order your master to bring them himself, and on his knees to present them to me, Ap Gwynn of Radnor."

Delamotte, who never wanted courage, boldly said, "Recollect, Ap Gwynn, you have no document to prove all you would wish, and the simple word of the Baron de Gaucort, would be your death warrant."

"Delamotte," replied Ap Gwynn, "you are right, I cannot act as I would desire, without further preparation;" then putting a whistle to

his mouth, in a second three of his half-naked followers appeared ; at the same time, he laid a drawn sword on the table by his side. Then addressing those who entered, he said, "Cainwritt, and you Pleswithel, stand in attendance on this worthy gentleman, until he has rectified for me a slight mistake I have made, and which he has had the goodness to point out to me. You, Ap Shenks, bring pen and ink."

Delamotte was so taken by surprise, that he found himself a prisoner before he knew the intention of the men who surrounded him : on attempting to rise, he was forced down on his chair, and to heighten his annoyance, Ap Gwynn was seized with an uncontrollable fit of laughter, at the ludicrous expression of Delamotte's features. The ink, &c., having arrived, Ap Gwynn ordered Delamotte to take the quill, and to write according to his dictation ; at first he refused, but a blow on the shoulders with a club, convinced him that no violence would be wanting to induce him to

act according to the desire of the Welch ruffian. Ap Gwynn then asked him, whether he was prepared to obey; he confessed his readiness, but protested against the force used. The Welchman then turning to his men, said, "You may withdraw, knaves; we will have no eaves-dropping, but guard the egress, and at such distance remain, that you may hear my voice.—Should I call loudly, enter quickly, and despatch the prisoner.—I would be alone with him,—away."

When they had departed, Ap Gwynn arose, and with the sword suspended over Delamotte, dictated and forced him to write a complete confession of the plot, and of all things connected with it, and then quietly taking the document, seated himself as before.

"'Tis well, Delamotte," said he, "we owe you a boon; you have taught Ap Gwynn a lesson of prudence that he will not easily forget. Once more, we pledge you!" Saying this, he drained the goblet to the dregs.—Delamotte, who felt that they were now utterly

in the power of Ap Gwynn, sat revolving in his mind what course he could adopt which would save him. On the one hand he dreaded the rage of De Gaucort, on the other, the threats of Ap Gwynn ; and although he might be before-hand with him, in disclosing the plot, the written confession just extorted, when produced before those who would investigate the matter, would immediately render useless, (as far as pardon was concerned) his later confession. Suddenly an idea seemed to strike him, and turning to his partner in villainy.—“ Ap Gwynn ” said he, “ you know not the Baron de Gaucort, he will not believe my word, and will deem that there be some league between us. You must produce your bond yourself, and claim boldly the fulfilment,—he dare not then refuse.”

“ ’Tis not my wont, comrade, to be thus at the call of any man,” replied Ap Gwynn, “ but since we’ve known each other a good space, for your sake I will forego my usual custom, and will claim in person the fulfilment of the bond.”

"Thanks, Ap Gwynn, and for yours I will endeavour to make my master be prepared to meet the demand. And now one more request,—let not your associates know from whom you receive the gold."

"Agreed," answered Ap Gwynn.

"Then here," said Delamotte, taking up the goblet, "is to the health of the honest Ap Gwynn:—through good and ill, I will be your friend—here is my hand to the compact."

"Bravely said, Delamotte; and there's mine,—of rougher materials, though perhaps of not less honest." Ap Gwynn having passed him through his own guards, Delamotte took care in their presence cordially to shake once more his friend's hand, and the worthy pair then separated.

Delamotte on reaching the mansion of De Gaucort was immediately summoned by his master, who had awaited with some anxiety his return. A stormy discussion succeeded, which at last subsided into a low whisper. The last words of De Gaucort were, "Obey

implicitly my orders in this, Delamotte, and all shall be forgotten."

The morning had no sooner dawned than Delamotte hurried to Ap Gwynn, and told him that it would be useless visiting the quarter of De Gaucort, as the council were about to assemble there to settle on the terms of surrender.

"The more need is there of haste," replied Ap Gwynn. "Now lookye, friend Delamotte, either I receive the gold this day, or you and your master shall hang."

"I said not," answered Delamotte, "that the gold should not be paid; but as it is necessary that you should confront De Gaucort, so I wished not for an unnecessary exposure whilst this council is sitting. Come, when the first shadows of evening are falling, to the small wicket on the south side, and I doubt not he will listen to reason."

The appointed time found Ap Gwynn at his post; a low whistle, which had been regulated between them as the signal, opened to him the

gate. Here Delamotte received him, and desired him to follow.

“So far, comrade,” said the Welchman, “have I agreed to your wishes ; but Ap Gwynn is not such a young fool as to put his nose into the enemy’s den. Here I stay ; and either your master or his gold comes to me ; and harkye ! one word, friend Delamotte : my faithful Welchmen are within hail, though I keep my word, and they know not my errand.”

The broad light of day would have shown a gesture of impatience on the features of Delamotte, but with trifling hesitation he answered, “As you will, Ap Gwynn ; although I fear the obstinacy of my master may ruin all. On your head be it.” He accordingly sought De Gaucort.

About a quarter of an hour had elapsed, when De Gaucort appeared. “Welchman,” said he, “my servant informs me that you require some gold to be paid you for some business in which he has engaged you, and that you here come to prefer your claim.”

“ True, baron; and still more true, that from this spot I stir not until the gold be paid.”

“ Prove to me only,” replied De Gaucort, “ the right by which you claim this gold, and I pledge my knightly honour to the liquidation of the debt.”

Ap Gwynn smiled when he heard the knight's guarantee; but putting his hand to his breast and pulling forth the paper, he said, “ Here is my voucher, which proves the Lord de Gaucort and this honest man, his faithful coadjutor, to have plotted the destruction of”——

“ Hold, Welchman!” replied De Gaucort; “ I acknowledge your right, and here is your gold—take it.”

Whilst De Gaucort was thus speaking, Ap Gwynn had stepped forward and had eagerly stretched forth his hand to seize the bag, but at the moment when he turned towards the baron for that purpose, a heavy blow from behind, struck by Delamotte, felled him to the earth. The dagger of De Gaucort was in

a moment at his throat, and without a struggle the ruffian resigned his breath.

The first object of the guilty baron was to dispose of the body; and having taken the fatal document from his heart, which was the cause of his death, they dragged the corpse to a muddy pond which was in the garden, and having tied stones to his head and heels, soon overcame this first difficulty.

But now came the most perilous portion of the task, that of withdrawing the Welchmen from the spot without suspicion. This, however, Delamotte undertook. Prowling cautiously about, he found out where Ap Gwynn's body-guard were. He then placed himself in a position from whence in a moment he could avoid pursuit; and having formerly been in Wales, and understanding the Welch language, he called out loudly for aid, attempting at the same time to imitate the tone of Ap Gwynn. The Welchmen were deceived, and flew to the rescue; but all they gained was to

lose their way in the darkness, and in an unknown town.

The following morning the Welchmen went to the spot where they had parted from their chief, but there was no clue for further pursuit. The confusion, moreover, attending the termination of a siege had commenced. The civil portion of the inhabitants, having Henry's permission, were already quitting the place, and since no one cared for the unfortunate Ap Gwynn, as he was known only as a brawler and a disturber of the public peace, their search was vain. The readiness of the blow restored Delamotte to his master's favour, and there being no fear of discovery, the brain of De Gaucort revolved with new plots for the destruction of his friend.

CHAPTER XVII.

Our expectation hath this day an end :—
The dauphin, whom of succour we entreated,
Returns us—that his powers are not yet ready
To raise so great a siege. Therefore, dread king,
We yield our town.

SHAKSPEARE.

As may have been presumed, from the termination of the preceding chapter, the inhabitants of Harfleur had consumed every edible that the town contained, and nothing that the ingenuity in the art of war of those days could devise, or that the energy or valour of the besieged could supply, had been omitted. The council, as mentioned before as having been held, decided on an expression of a desire

to treat, and Henry in consequence, had sent the Earl of Dorset for that purpose. By a solemn contract sworn to by both sides, the town was in four days to be delivered up to the English, if not relieved before that period. Henry in the mean time pledging himself not to injure or annoy the place. No relief having arrived by the time stipulated, on the twenty-second of September, after thirty-six days' siege, the town surrendered.

On the day of the surrender, Henry, surrounded by his principal officers, was seated on a throne, on a hill opposite to one of the gates of the city. A line of soldiery was formed to the town; shortly afterwards, Sir Lionel de Braquemont, and the Lord de Gaucourt, with the principal warriors and citizens, (the priests bearing the host before them,) marched to the foot of the throne, and presented the keys of the town. The English herald then called out,—“Men of Harfleur, listen to the just decree of your sovereign lord, the King of England and France. In his

great mercy, he deigns to spare your town of Harfleur, although you have appeared in arms against your lawful sovereign; he, moreover, declares, that all the sick and old, women and children, may depart from the town, without question or molestation:—that those citizens who may swear allegiance to his gracious majesty, may remain in their good town of Harfleur, and that all others who refuse to take the aforesaid oath, will be conveyed as prisoners to England.—Hear, ye men of Harfleur, and rejoice in the clemency of your sovereign.”

Henry then said,—“ Brave De Braquemont, are we to find in you a subject, or still an enemy?”

“ King of England,” replied the governor, “ De Braquemont has sworn allegiance to Charles of Valois, and a De Braquemont was never known to break his faith.”

“ Gallant knight,” replied Henry, “ we would not that you did aught that duty forbids: but whether as friend or foe, we shall

ever hold in esteem the name of De Braquemont. For the present he is our prisoner. —Duke of Clarence, we owe you a boon for your conduct before Harfleur,—we consign our noble enemy to your care. My subjects,” he continued, as he turned round to the mailed group, “let each take charge of a prisoner, and bear in mind, that as they have fought nobly, so shew yourselves generous enemies.”

The Duke of Clarence then stepping forward, offered his mailed hand to De Braquemont, which the latter as cordially accepted. The prisoners were soon divided amongst the English, and those, who a few hours before were inspired with mutual hate, were soon enjoying the same board, the same bed, with their antagonists. De Gaucort fell to the lot of the Earl of March, but shortly afterwards, at the request of De Braquemont, Clarence having gained March’s acquiescence, took him also under his protection.

The following day, a solemn procession, headed by Henry, who walked barefoot, ac-

accompanied by his knights, and the priests in their pontifical robes, proceeded to the church of St. Martin, to offer up thanksgivings for the successful termination of the siege. Those also who were to quit the town, now commenced their journey, each provided with a small piece of money, and a change of raiment; they were also fed at the king's expence, until received by their countryman, Marshal Boncicault.

A few days after, a herald arrived from the enemy, proposing to exchange the Governor of Calais, who had been taken whilst hunting without the walls, for De Braquemont. Henry gladly acceded to this, more especially as from Clarence's account, his prisoner's health was failing him, from anxiety for his country's welfare, and that thus, when she most required his services, he was absent. Henry sent for him, therefore, and told him, that he proposed to give him his liberty, but that in return, he demanded a boon of him, to wit,—
“That he would conduct the Duke of Cla-

rence with a flag of truce, to the court of the Dauphin."

"Your majesty may in all command the services of Sir Lionel de Braquemont," replied he, "save in those things which militate against his duty to his lawful sovereign." Henry then told him, that two other knights were included in the cartel, and that he was, therefore, at liberty to choose those whom he might desire to accompany him. De Braquemont immediately named De Gaucort, and Ruvigné, to whom he was so much indebted on the night of the sally. The king saw with grief the infatuated belief of Sir Lionel in the fidelity of his friend De Gaucort, but it was impossible, without a breach of faith, to warn him of his danger.

The following day, previous to their departure, they were summoned before Henry : the king received De Braquemont in a manner the most flattering, and prayed him to receive as a testimony of his esteem, a suit of Milan armour, which he himself had frequently

worn during the siege; he placed also a chain of gold round his neck, and presented him with an autograph letter to his sovereign, expressive of his admiration of his gallant defence of Harfleur. The young Ruvigne then knelt down, and a sword was presented to him by the hands of the monarch. On De Gaucort's appearing, who also had much distinguished himself at the siege, and who had been perpetually seen, and noticed by the English, as one of the most adventurous of the knights of Harfleur, Henry coldly turned away, saying—"Baron de Gaucort, you have our licence to depart." Nothing could exceed the astonishment of all at this unexpected termination of the scene; and Clarence, whose guest he had been, thought himself bound in courtesy to attempt some explanation, and was on the point of turning to Henry, when De Gaucort replied, "Thanks, King of England, for this permission; we pray for opportunity to repay this courtesy."—They then departed, and Clarence having re-

ceived his final commands, shortly after followed them. Five of the most distinguished nobles in the British camp, and the herald king-at-arms, were of the duke's retinue.

France, since the assumption in 1388 of the reigns of government by the present monarch, Charles the Sixth, had been a perpetual prey to different factions. The most powerful were those of the Dukes of Burgundy and Orleans, each striving through their imbecile king, to rule the fair realm of France. Orleans had been murdered in the streets of Paris, by order of the Duke of Burgundy, in 1407; but the son of the murdered duke had grown more powerful than had been his father, and internally vowed to revenge his barbarous murder. The present Duke of Orleans was nephew to the king, whilst Burgundy was his uncle; this near relationship did not, however, prevent plots and counter-plots, reconciliations, and fresh animosities, following each other in rapid succession, until in the year preceding the

date of this invasion, the Duke of Burgundy had been expelled from court, and retired to his own dominions in Flanders, whilst Orleans kept possession of the king and the government. The Duke of Burgundy then solicited the assistance of Henry, and each was pleased to find an ally, although their causes for war were most different, and their eventual animosity certain. Affairs were in this posture, when Clarence and his suite arrived at Rouen, at which place the court then was. The duke, without declaring his intentions, (in the name of his master) requested an audience of the king and the dauphin. A court was accordingly summoned, and Charles prepared in the presence of all, to hear the propositions for peace, which, from the disabled state of the English army from disease, he doubted not to be the purport of their mission.

The king and queen were seated on their thrones, and on their right, but a little retired, the young dauphin, on whose countenance the fire of youth was blended with the hectic

flush of premature decay, but whose energy of character had already gained him the respect of his enemies. Behind the king stood the young Duke of Orleans, handsome, but with a bold and reckless expression, which gave evidence of the man, who, shortly before, had doomed without remorse, the heads of the opposite faction to the axe of the executioner. Under a thin silken canopy, sat a young girl about sixteen, unadorned by aught but her native beauty. Her coal-black hair hung down in tresses over her neck, and her dark eyes, full of animation, gave token of the intellect which in reality she possessed. Near her stood three or four ladies, all in the bloom of youth. One in particular stood pensively gazing on the scene, and when the Princess Katherine (for she was the person seated,) turned and addressed her, a glow suffused her face and bosom, which plainly told how interesting the subject of discourse was to her. —Before answering, she scanned over each of the English commissioners, as they ap-

proached, and then with a faint smile, shaking her head, relapsed into her former pensive attitude.

The ceremony now commenced. The commissioners, each armed to the teeth, approached the throne. When within a few paces, they stopped, and Clarence alone stepping before the rest, spoke,—“ In the name of our master, Henry of England, we greet thee, Charles of Valois. Since peace must be the ardent wish of all true lovers of their country, Henry of England vouchsafes to prepare a means by which the blood of the respective nations may cease to flow, and the Englishman and the Frenchman may combine in a holier and worthier cause,—the extirpation of the infidel;—the cause of Christendom, the cause of God ”

“ That our cousin of England is thus pacifically inclined, answered the French monarch, (who was then enjoying one of those lucid intervals, which occasionally permitted him to exercise the functions of royalty), we rejoice

both for the sake of our province of Normandy, and for that of the suffering soldiery of England."

"Charles of Valois," resumed Clarence, "you mistake our meaning. We are not come on the part of our sovereign lord to sue for peace, but to leave our cause to the arbitration of God. This letter, written by the hand of our sovereign, will explain our words. We are, moreover, commanded to read it in the presence of the assembled nobles of France."

"You have our permission to proceed, Duke of Clarence," replied the monarch, "though we know not by what right the king of England arrogates to himself the power of dictation in our court. We waive however, this discussion, as none shall say, that Charles of France made the want of courtesy in his rival a pretext to evade hearing that which might lead to prevent the further effusion of blood, and might tend to the welfare of his subjects."

Clarence having made a sign, the herald came forward, and read in a loud voice :—

Henry,* by the grace of God, king of France and England, lord of Ireland, to the high and mighty prince, the Dauphin of Vienne, our cousin, eldest son of the most mighty prince our cousin and adversary of France. Whereas from reverence to God, and to avoid the shedding of human blood, we have frequently sought for peace, and have not been able to possess it, yet still has our desire increased. We have considered that our wars are followed by death and destruction, and wailings of the women. We, therefore, since it has pleased Providence to visit our cousin with infirmity, consider that the remedy rests upon us and you. We offer you, therefore, to put our whole quarrel, with God's grace between our person and your's.—And should you deem this not fitting, because of the interest which you conceive our cousin, your father, has in it, we declare to you in this our citation, that if you will entertain

* Henry's challenge to the Dauphin is a translation of the original French—but in a condensed form.

it, and engage in it, we are well pleased that our said cousin, for our reverence to God, and because he is a sacred person, shall enjoy all he has at present for the term of his life, whatever shall happen by the will of God between us and you, as it shall be agreed between our councils. So that if God shall give us the victory, the crown of France with its appurtenances, as our right, shall be immediately rendered to us without difficulty after his decease. Let, us, therefore, cousin, decide this war between our two persons, and thus prevent misbelievers, by occasion of our wars, decrying christianity, and the people of God from destroying one another. We make this offer for the honour and fear of God, and without the advice of counsellors, who dare not advise on so high a matter. But if this offer of our's takes not full effect, this challenge shall never be urged in prejudice of our right and title to the crown. We date this from our town of Harfleur, the twenty-sixth of September."

Clarence then stepping forth, and taking his gauntlet from his hand, said, "Here I, Duke of Clarence, in the name of my sovereign lord, Henry of England, France and Ireland, do challenge thee, Dauphin of Vienne, to mortal combat: and may the Holy Virgin protect the right!"—Saying this, he cast his steel gauntlet on the first step of the throne, and then proudly retired to where the other commissioners stood.

The dauphin instantly darted forward, and was on the point of taking up the gauntlet, when Orleans interposed. "This," said he, "most noble prince, is subject for your royal father to decide, and for his council."

"Duke of Orleans, you speak justly," replied the king. "We ourselves will give attention to this matter."—"My lords ambassadors from the king of England, though discourteous in your errand, and but little what the circumstances of your royal master could justify, still we hold the laws of hospitality in too great esteem, not to forget,

whilst you are in our court, this discourtesy. To-morrow at noon, you shall hear our pleasure. Till that time you are our guests. We will meet at the Banqueting-hall. Fair dames, we expect your presence there, to do honour to our guests of England." Then turning to Clarence—"you have our permission to withdraw." The commissioners having withdrawn, accompanied by Orleans, and the court being dismissed, a council was immediately held for the discussion of this question. The high-spirited Dauphin supported by Chatillon, the high admiral, the Duke of Bar and others, wished to accept the challenge, urging the foul disgrace, that should it be refused, would be heaped upon his name, and upon the chivalrous character of France. Others, on the other hand, objected to this, on account of the Dauphin's youth, and again that his life was too precious; moreover, that the English were already vanquished. The weak king, who was turned by every breath, was caught by the chivalrous spirit of his son, and had determined to accede to that council; in

fact the Duke of Alençon had departed in search of Orleans to inform him of the result, when he having seen to the entertainment of his guests, rushing into the council chamber, with a frown of indignation at the assembled counsellors, exclaimed, "how is this, my liege, and you my lords: has Orleans sunk so low, that his advice is not required? We have traitors in the council: we have friends, I say, to false Burgundy: we hear from our cousin of Alençon, that without Orleans you have decided on granting this rash boy's request: is it so, my liege?"

"Duke of Orleans," impatiently interrupted the Dauphin, "did our rival Henry of England consider this, when far younger than I, he saved his father's life at Shrewsbury?"

"Gallantly spoken, boy," replied Orleans, "but not wisely: I say again, my liege, is aught yet decided?"

"My noble cousin of Orleans," answered the king, we had so decided, thinking 'twould meet your approval: but since 'tis otherwise, say what would your counsel dictate."

“ My liege, Orleans has ever been an humble servant of your majesty, and knows how to obey your commands—but when the army of Henry, diminished in numbers, dispirited by a protracted siege, and the small force that does remain enfeebled by disease, presses on his imagination ; when he knows that should even France’s champion be victorious, the claim would still (false as it is) be persisted in,—as no promises of Henry’s could militate against the claims of the Earl of March ; and on the other hand were Henry victorious, (and few are there that could cope with his powerful arm), the true sons of France would never accede to the terms, and war would still desolate this realm. But the power of France would be reduced, as some might adhere to these terms, and desert the standard under which they now burn to combat. Seeing and knowing all this, Orleans feels that his duty to his sovereign, his love for his country, makes him declare, that he cannot accede to this unexpected decision.”

“ Orleans, my lords, is right,” promptly re-

joined the king," we will abide by his wise counsel."

The Dauphin was about indignantly to reply, when the king resumed,—“ My son, be silent, and respect the wisdom of the counsel and the honest integrity of your cousin of Orleans.” The king then left the council-chamber, accompanied by Orleans, whilst the Dauphin was left to confer with those who thus pusillanimously had failed to speak in his behalf. But such power had Orleans acquired over the mind of the weak monarch, and so unscrupulous had he shown himself in getting rid of those who offended him, that no one cared to throw themselves in the breach.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Borne by my steed, or wafted by my sail
Across the desert, or before the gale,
Bound where thou wilt, my barb ! or glide my prow !
But be the star that guides the wanderer thou !

BYRON.

WHEN Katherine and her fair companions had reached their apartments, the princess dismissing all but Constance, seating herself on a couch by her young friend, said playfully, "Why, Constance, one would think that you had expected to have seen a lover, and not a cousin amongst those mailed islanders ; for my part I saw none that repaid the trouble of a glance—and still full boldly did they do their mission."—"My dear Katherine, for such you

will that I should call you," replied Constance, "I am, I confess, sorely disappointed that my cousin of March is not of the chosen number; but when we recollect the claim that he has to this very realm, so far superior to King Henry's, (if in truth either have a claim) we ought not to have thought to see him, or to fancy that 'twere possible. But I would you had seen my cousin;—with all the fire of youth, the kindness of the woman, and the proud bearing of the warrior. Had you but seen him, as I have, when a mere boy, risking for my sake, to gain the highest crag in search of the eagle's nest, and when I called him back, laughing at my fears; or again, when leaping from rock to rock in pursuit of the mountain deer, he outstripped each mountaineer in his native hills—had you but seen him as I did in his warrior's garb, speaking to me as his playfellow of former years, and when deeds of arms were mentioned, had seen the fire of his eye; you, even you, Katherine, who laugh at such feelings would have loved my cousin."

"WELL, MY DEAR 'CONSCIENCE,' THOUGH KATHERINE HAS SAID WHAT YOU HEARD HER SAY, SHE IS A VERY SENSIBLE GIRL, & A VERY AFFECTIONATE ONE; & VERY WORTHY OF YOUR LOVE; & IN CONSEQUENCE THEREOF, WE SHALL SOMETIME BE THE HAPPIER PERSONS—WE HAVE BEEN SINCE ALL THE FATHERS OF THIS COUNTRY'S COURT HAVE BEEN THEIR FATHERS—THAT EVER IT DID EVER BECOME OUR FATHER'S; & I PROMISE YOU WE WILL BE SO IN THE END. NOW, MY DEAR 'CONSCIENCE,' SHE HAS BEEN ASKING ME TO LET HER REMAIN, AND IN MY SILENT LIFE I NEVER HEARD OF SUCH AN EQUIVOCAL OR A CROOKED ANSWER: BUT WE WILL TRY YOUR 'CONSCIENCE': YOU SHALL HEAR ALL ABOUT THIS LITTLE BUSINESS THE NEXT MORNING, MUST WE NOT, 'CONSCIENCE'?"

THE 'CONSCIENCE,' HUSHING, Laid DOWN HER HEAD, WHILE KATHERINE CONTINUED TO TORMENT HER: AT LENGTH ONE OF THE LADIES ENTERED, AND SAID THAT SIR LIONEL DE BRAGMONT WAS IN ATTENDANCE. HE WAS INSTANTLY SUMMONED. WHEN HE MADE HIS APPEARANCE, KATHERINE, ADDRESSING HIM, SAID, "SIR LIONEL, WE HAVE HEARD GOOD REPORT OF YOU SINCE LAST YOU WERE

at our royal father's court : France rings with the gallant defence of Harfleur. We ladies, however, are deemed not fit depositors of state affairs, and in truth have heard but little of the war, and of our friends. We, therefore, sent for you to give us some knowledge of these matters."

"I give you, princess, my most hearty thanks," replied Sir Lionel, "in that you have deigned to acknowledge to your father's servant that good report hath reached your ear, and that you are pleased to acknowledge this small service, which was naught but De Braquemont's devoir."

"We have heard, De Braquemont," continued the princess, "that the savage English most wantonly have destroyed the country round Harfleur, and that when you were dismissed, King Henry insulted in the person of the Baron de Gaucort the whole nobility of France."

"Fair lady," replied the knight, "they who speak thus of the King of England, have

spoken falsely. France, in the field of battle, has no more terrible enemy than Henry of England, but the fight over, clemency and honour rule all his acts. We, his prisoners, were served before his nobles; our wounds were looked to, and even our very property retained for our use." He then recounted how Henry had dismissed Rouvigné and himself; but added, "as regards the Baron de Gaucort, I understand not King Henry's conduct: 'tis evident some strong personal motive of dislike urged him to thus slight so gallant a knight; but what that is, is hidden from our knowledge. De Gaucort is equally astonished with ourselves. On our first surrendering ourselves, we gave our plighted faith not to attempt escape, and each was allotted to some knight, and day after day new amusements were invented to make us forget our captivity."

"We hear," resumed Katherine, "that during the siege the Lord de Gaucort was most distinguished."

“In every sally,” answered Sir Lionel, “he was the foremost: and naught but his valour saved the town in that day when that paragon of chivalry, the Earl of March, attacking our northern battlements, headed the escalade. Three times the English rushing to the assault were driven back by the valour of De Gaucort; and still, almost unaided, a fourth time did this English earl plant the ladder against our walls, and, in spite of all opposition, gained the top; those who attempted to follow the adventurous chief were hurled down, the ladders were overthrown, and alone for some time having placed his back against a projecting portion of the battlements, he kept off the crowd of assailants; one knight, more bold, proposed surrender to him; a blow from his sword was his only response;—the Count de Breteuil fell; but the weapon broke in the wound. The earl was now almost defenceless; we restrained our weapons, as unwilling that so gallant a warrior should perish, when, to our astonishment, with one bound he sprung

from the battlements into the moat; at this moment, when a watery grave appeared inevitable, as the weight of his armour seemed to render any struggle useless, and our crossbowmen were endeavouring to prevent the approach of any succour to the moat; King Henry came up with his archers. We retired from the wall, or lay stretched on the battlement, as no armour can resist the English shaft. The king in a moment cast off his archer's suit, and himself succouring the earl, dragged him to the dry ground, whilst the latter still held the broken blade in his grasp. The shouts of the English proclaimed his safety. Shortly after a herald with a flag of truce entered the town, and proclaimed that a chapter of knights on the following day was to be held in the King of England's camp, and offered safeguard to such as might wish to be present, and, as the herald expressed it, 'do honour to the most valourous Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March. Two hours' truce was proclaimed, and ten of the most distin-

guished knights in Harfleur attended, eager to show the respect we bore to a gallant enemy. The young earl before this goodly assemblage received the accolade; and perhaps never was knighthood more worthily bestowed, never was satisfaction more universal. When Harfleur was surrendered, the young earl prayed of Henry that he might be permitted to have charge of his brother knights, as he termed those who had graced the ceremonial of his investiture, and who were now made prisoners: I mean those who attended the chapter; and if his gallantry had been before remarkable, his courtesy was now equally conspicuous."

During this short history Constance had been sitting, her cheek visibly portraying the alternations of hope and fear as each incident of the assault was detailed; and when Sir Lionel described his jumping into the moat, it was hardly possible to conceal her agitation; at length when he spoke of the earl's being knighted, and his conduct to the prisoners, her

generous heart was tried beyond endurance, and she burst into tears. De Braquemont greatly distressed, but still unable to understand why his history should have had this effect, looked to Katherine for explanation. She immediately, to save her friend, said that the Earl of March was her maid of honour's cousin, and that they had been bred up together in Wales.

"Am I then happy enough," resumed De Braquemont, "to see the Lady Constance de Hugueville?"

"You are, sir knight," answered Katherine.

"Perhaps then, lady, this will tell you more of your cousin than can I."—Saying this he drew forth a letter, carefully sewn up in silk, and presented it to the Lady Constance. "The earl," continued Sir Lionel, "gave me this in charge, and desired that, if it were possible to find out the place of your abode in France, I was to deliver it in person. Moreover, as he appeared much distressed at some rumours he had heard about your having been

in the power of Amercot Marcell, I pledged myself to find out the truth, and to do my utmost in your behalf wherever you might happen to be found : also to send a messenger to him with any tidings I might be able to procure.

“ To-morrow, as you must have heard, the commissioners return ; and perhaps you would wish to assure your cousin yourself of your safety. The Duke of Clarence will take charge of it for the sake both of the Earl of March, and because a true knight ne’er refuses a fair maiden’s behests.”

“ We thank you, sir knight,” replied Katherine, “ for your presence, and for your goodly history. In return, we have to say, that four days ago we saw the Lady de Braquemont, and our friend, the Lady Constance, has so gained her heart, that perhaps, when we can spare her, she will thank you in person at your castle of Beauvais. We now not only give you leave to depart, but pray you hasten to your true lady and our very dear friend.”

De Braquemont bent the knee and saluted the fair hand of the princess, and having received the warm thanks of the Lady Constance, left the apartment. He then hurried to his sovereign, and having obtained permission for a few days, bid adieu to his former kind captors, and hastened to his own domain.

As the princess was retiring, she laughingly said, " We shall expect to see our cousin of March's letter ; that is to say, if we do not, of a truth he is more than cousin, ay, and my own little Constance's sworn knight too ; so, go to your room, dear Constance, and may you find as great content therein as your friend Katherine would wish." Thus speaking, she kissed her forehead, and they parted.

Constance hurried to her room ; and first, as is usual in like cases, shed a flood of happy tears at the glory Edmund had gained, and again at his recollection of his cousin, who felt that he was everything to her existence ; that his glory was her glory : that on his life and on his happiness depended hers. She then

carefully took off the silken cover which enveloped it, and holding the letter in her hand hardly dared to open it, as she felt that her hopes, her happiness, might by this letter be either rendered secure, or dashed for ever to the ground. At length, having kissed and re-kissed the precious scrawl, having examined the seal, the direction, and in fact everything but the inside, she ventured to tear it open. It ran thus :—

“ My well-beloved cousin,—Little can you conceive, much less can I describe, the feelings that agitated my mind, when a short time since, a report before Harfleur reached me, that you, with the trusty Salisbury, had been cast away on the French coast, and that Amercot Marcell had seized upon the vessel, and its precious contents. I know full well (if it be true) how much you must have suffered, though your virtue and innocence would protect you, even amongst such lawless men.

“ Again, a report said that the Count d’Armagnac had procured your release, and from his

known friendship for the princess, I trust that she was the cause, and that you are now safely at her court. In such hope I send this by our noble antagonist Sir Lionel de Braquemont ; he will, if this reaches you, recount all the events of the late siege, and of the gallant bearing of our noble Henry. Even your grandfather, Constance, would have gloried in the sight. But, my dear cousin, you are now in a foreign land, and Edmund has pledged himself ever to guard you from wrong—would that he could be the bearer of his own missive.

“ Constance, since we parted, I have felt a blank in my heart. I thought that the numerous avocations of a chief, in time of war, would soon have dissipated the feeling, from whatever cause it might arise. I endeavoured to render the followers of the Earl of March conspicuous above others in the field : I succeeded : but I cared not for the praise. I hunted the wild boar in the forest of the Carne, and when he charged boldly, and was transfixd by my spear,—I rode home by the solitary paths, I had no pleasure

in the victory. I returned to my tent,—I searched my heart for the cause of my discontent. My king was my friend—I knew of no enemies to the Earl of March. Friends had I many. My possessions were ample;—health, strength and wealth were mine;—I paused; my search appeared vain—when suddenly, my eye rested on your letter, which never has left me. I perused it once and once again.—I rose from my seat—'twas Constance had occupied my mind. I took her gift in my hand, I vowed myself to her service: and when on the walls of Harfleur, side by side by my gallant countrymen I fought, when all were overthrown,—when death threatened,—when numbers pressed on, 'twas Constance nerved my arm;—and when I gained from our monarch the glorious accolade, 'twas Constance dubbed me knight,—'twas for Constance it was gained.

“ If I have been presumptuous, pity and pardon me; but whilst I live, Constance, and Constance alone, will be written in my heart: Constance shall be the name that shall inspire

me in the battle field,—and if our enemies succumb, the recollection of Constance and her virtues shall teach me clemency. Oh! my cousin,—my more than cousin, my dear, dear Constance,—say, will she sanction the presumption,—shall March be happy? May the glove from her fair hand be worn in his crest. May March consider, that when he gains renown, 'tis Constance shares it—'tis Constance glories in it. Farewell, my cousin. May the saints protect you!”

To say that Constance was happy is a weak, a trifling phrase. Over and over again she read the letter, whilst tears of happiness rolled down her fair cheeks; and when Katherine entered, and kindly taking her hand, asked her of her cousin, and her cause of sorrow: she fell on the princess's neck, and sobbed, but could not answer. At length, when a little recovered, she spoke of March, and Katherine felt quite satisfied that the tears she shed were not tears of sorrow, and that her friend was not doomed to sigh in vain.

The following morn, at the appointed hour,

the court being assembled, and all prepared as on the preceding day, the commissioners having advanced to the foot of the throne, the Duke of Orleans stood forth."

"Duke of Clarence," said he, "and you, most noble ambassadors, by the especial favour of our gracious sovereign Charles of France, I am made the interpreter of his answer in this question, so momentous to the interests of our respective countries.—And thus his majesty speaketh,—‘Say to the King of England, that his brother of France is as anxious as he can be to terminate the unhappy differences which now cause the desolation of his fair province of Normandy, and the destruction of his liege subjects: but that the terms offered by his majesty of England are inadmissible; as whichever party might be victorious, the subjects of France would never bow the knee to an usurping dynasty. Moreover, the army of King Henry is already well nigh destroyed, and let him answer himself, what would the overthrowing of the hosts of France require, (were it

possible), when already one petty town has destroyed half his force? Take back therefore, your gauntlet, and we counsel the king of England to re-embark peaceably at Harfleur, and then we will treat of peace. "Till that period we bid you farewell." The commissioners now withdrew, and immediately departed from Rouen.

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